

THE ARGOSY.

FEBRUARY 1, 1869.

ROLAND YORKE.

A SEQUEL TO "THE CHANNINGS."

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

PROLOGUE.—CHAPTER IV.

GOING HOME WITH THE NEWS.

IN the vicinity of Bedford Square, so near to it that we may as well designate the locality by that name throughout the story, stood the large professional residence of Greatorex and Greatorex. It was large in every sense of the word; both as to the size of the house, and to the extent of the business transacted in it. A safe, good, respectable firm was that of Greatorex and Greatorex, standing as well in the public estimation as any solicitors could stand: and deservedly so. Mr. Greatorex was a man of nice honour; upright, just, trustworthy. He would not have soiled his hands with what is technically called dirty work: if any client wanted underhand business done, swindling work (although it might be legal) that would not bear the light of day, he need not take it to Greatorex and Greatorex.

The head of the firm, John Greatorex, was still in what many call the prime of life. He was fifty-eight, active and energetic. Marrying when he was very young, he really did not look a great deal older than his son Bede. And Bede was not his first-born. The eldest son had entered the army; he was in India now, Captain Greatorex. *He* also had married young, and his little daughter and only child had been sent home to her grand-parents in accordance with the prevailing custom.

The wife of Mr. Greatorex had been Miss Ollivera, sister to the father of John Ollivera the barrister, whose sad end has been lately recorded. Mrs. Greatorex had fallen into ill health for some time past now; in fact she was slowly dying of an incurable complaint. But for not liking to leave her, Mr. Greatorex might have hastened down as soon as the sad news reached him of his nephew's premature end. I say he

"might;" but Mr. Greatorex was, himself, only recovering from an attack of illness, and was scarcely strong enough to travel. And so he waited at home with all the patience he could call up, understanding nothing but that his nephew John, who had been as dear to him as were his own children, was dead. His children had been many: eight. James (Captain Greatorex), the eldest; Bede the second, one year younger; next came two daughters, who were married and away; then a son, Matthew, who was working his way to competency in Spain; the two next had died, and Francis was the youngest. The latter, called Frank always, was in the house in Bedford Square, but not yet made a partner.

The young barrister just dead, John Ollivera, left no relations to mourn for him, except his brother William, and the Greatorex family. The two brothers had had to make their own way in the world, their uncle Mr. Greatorex helping them to do it; the elder one choosing the Bar (as you have seen); William, the church. John had his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, and would certainly have risen into note had he lived; William was a curate.

Three o'clock was striking in London on Wednesday afternoon, as a train slackened its speed and drew into the Paddington terminus. One of the first of its passengers to alight was Mr. Bede Greatorex. He had a small black bag in his hand, and jumped with it into a hansom cab.

"Bedford Square!"

The cabman answered with a nod as he touched his hat. He had driven Mr. Bede Greatorex before, who was sufficiently well known in London. Instead, however, of being permitted to dash up to the well-known door, the man found himself stopped a few yards short of it.

"I'll get out here," said Mr. Bede Greatorex.

Paying the fare, he went on with his bag, and glanced up at the windows as he crossed to the house. All the blinds were down. It was a very large house: it had been two originally. In the old, old days, some thirty or more years ago, Mr. Greatorex had rented only one of the houses. As his family and business increased, he bought the one he occupied and the next adjoining, and made them into one. There were two entrances still: the one pertained to the house and Mrs. Greatorex; the other was the professional entrance. The rooms on the ground floor—and there were several—were taken up by the business; one of them, looking to the garden, was the sitting-room of Mr. Greatorex.

Bede went to the private entrance, and let himself in with his latch-key. Lodging his small bag at the foot of the handsome staircase, he walked through some passages to his father's sitting-room; which was empty. Retracing his steps he went upstairs; a maid-servant happened to meet him on the first landing; he handed her the bag and opened the door of the dining-room. A spacious, well-fitted up apartment, its

paper white and gold, with streaks of crimson slightly intermingled to give it colour.

Mr. Greatorex was there. He sat over the fire and had fallen asleep. It surprised Bede: for Mr. Greatorex was a man not given to idleness or indulgence of any kind. Indeed, to see him sitting upstairs in the day time was an event almost unknown. Bede closed the door again softly. There was a haggard look in the elder man's face, partly the effect of his recent illness; and Bede would not disturb him.

Outside the door, he stood a moment in hesitation. It was a spacious landing-place, something like an upper hall. The floor was carpeted with dark green; painted windows—yellow, blue, crimson—threw down a bright light of colour; there was a small conservatory at one end, containing odoriferous plants, on which the sun was shining; and a chaste statue or two imparted still life to the whole.

Bede hesitated. None but himself knew how horribly he hated and dreaded the tale he had to tell about poor John Ollivera. All the way up he had been rehearsing to himself the manner in which he should break it for the best, but the plan had gone clean out of his head now.

"I'll go up and wash my hands first, at any rate," decided Bede. "The dust was worse than we had it on Monday."

Ascending to the second landing, he was quietly crossing it to his own room, when a door was flung open, and a pretty little girl in blue, her curling hair bound back with ribbons, came flying out. It was the daughter of Captain Greatorex. The young lady had naturally a will of her own; and since her arrival from India, the indulgence lavished on her had not tended to lessen it. But she was a charming child, and wonderfully keen.

"Oh, Bede, have you come back! Grandmamma has been asking for you all the day."

"Hush, Jane! I'll go in to grandmamma presently."

Miss Jane did not choose to "hush." She evaded Bede's hand, flew across the soft carpet of the landing, and threw open a bed-room door, calling out that Bede had come. As to styling him Uncle Bede, she had never done anything of the kind.

He heard his mother's voice, and could almost have boxed the child's ears. Back she came again, laying hold of him this time, her saucy dark brown eyes, grave now, lifted to his face.

"Bede, how came John Ollivera to die?"

"Hush, Jane," he said again. This was precisely the point on which he did not care to hold present communication with his mother. He wished, if possible, to spare her; but the little girl was persistent.

"Is he dead, Bede?"

"Yes, child, he is dead."

"Oh, dear! And he can never kiss me again, or bring me new dolls! I broke the last one in two, and threw it at him."

Her eyes filled with tears. Bede, deep in thought, put away the little hands that had fastened on his arms.

"I liked him better than you, Bede. What made him die?"

"Bede! Bede! is that you?" called out his mother.

Bede had to go in. Mrs. Greatorex was on the sofa, dressed, her back supported by pillows. Her complexion was of dark olive, showing her Spanish extraction; a capable, kindly woman she had ever been in life; and was endeavouring now to meet the death that she knew could not be far off, as a Christian should. He stooped and kissed her. In features he resembled her more than any of her children.

"Do you feel better, mother?"

"My dear, you know that there can be no 'better' for me here. The pain is not heavy to-day. Have you just come up to town?"

"Just got in now."

"And what have you to tell me? I cannot *believe* that John is dead. When the telegram came yesterday morning, your father happened to be with me, and they brought it up. But for that, I dare say he would not have told me yet. He spares me all the trouble that he can, you know, dear. I fainted, Bede; I did indeed. The death must have been very sudden."

"Yes," replied Bede.

"Was it a fit? Jane, run to the school-room. Your governess will be angry at your staying so long."

Jane's answer to this mandate was to perch herself on the arm of the sofa, side-by-side with the speaker, and to fix her eyes and her attention on the face of Bede.

"None of the Olliveras have been subject to fits; remember that, Bede," continued Mrs. Greatorex. "Neither did John himself look at all likely for one. To think that he should go before me! Jane, my little dear one, you must indeed go to Miss Ford."

"I am going to stay here, grand'ma, and to hear about John."

"There's nothing much to hear, or to tell," spoke Bede, as much perhaps for his mother's ear as for the child's. "If you do not obey your grandmamma, Jane, I shall take you myself to the school-room."

"No you won't, Bede. Why don't you answer grand'ma about John?"

Mrs. Greatorex had nearly left off contending with Miss Jane; weary, sick, in pain, it was too much effort, and she generally yielded to the dominant little will. As she appeared to do now, for it was to Bede she spoke.

"Bede, dear, you are keeping me in suspense. Was it a fit?"

"No; it could not be called a fit."

"The heart, perhaps?"

"His death must have been quite sudden," said Bede, with pardon-

able evasion. "Instantaneous, the doctors thought: and therefore without pain."

"Poor John! poor John! The veil is lifted for him. Bede!"

Bede had begun to turn his attention to the young lady, and was putting her down from the sofa. He wheeled round at the word, and Miss Jane mounted again.

"What, mother?"

Mrs. Greatorex dropped her voice reverently; and her dark eyes, looking large from illness, had a bright, hopeful, yearning light in them as she spoke.

"I think he was fit to go."

"Yes," answered Bede, swallowing a lump of emotion. "It is the one drop of comfort amidst much darkness. At least——. But I must keep my word," he added, breaking suddenly off, and seizing the child again, as if glad of an excuse to cease; "you go now to Miss Ford, young lady."

She set up a succession of cries. Bede only carried her away the faster.

"You'll come back and tell me more, Bede," said Mrs. Greatorex.

"I will come by-and-by," he turned to say. "I have pressing things to do; and I have not yet seen my father. Try and get your afternoon's sleep, mother dear."

Miss Ford, a nursery governess, stood at the school-room door, and began to scold her pupil as she received her from the hands of Mr. Bede Greatorex. He shut himself into his room for a few minutes, and then descended the stairs in deep thought. He had begun to ask himself whether the worst could not be kept from his mother; not for very long could she be spared to them now.

Mr. Greatorex was coming out of the dining-room. He shook hands with his son, and they went back and sat down together. Bede grew quite agitated at the task before him. He hated to inflict pain; he knew that John Ollivera had been dear to his father, and that the blow would be keenly felt. All the news as yet sent up by him to Bedford Square was, that John was dead.

Whence, then, that grey look on his father's face?—the haggard mouth, the troubled, shrinking eyes, going searchingly out to Bede's? Mr. Greatorex was a fresh-looking man in general, with a healthy colour and smooth brown hair, tall and upright as his son. He looked short and shrinking and pale now.

"Bede! how came he to do it?"

Something like a relief came into Bede's heart as he heard the words. It was so much better for the way to have been paved for him!—the shock would not be so great.

"Then you know the particulars, sir."

"I fear I know the truth, Bede; not the particulars. *The Times*

had a short paragraph this morning, saying that John Ollivera had died by his own hand. Was it so?"

Bede gravely nodded. His breath was coming and going faster than is consistent with inward calmness.

"My God!" cried Mr. Greatorex, from between his quivering lips, as he sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. But the sacred word was not spoken in irreverence; no, nor in surprise; rather, as it seemed, in the light of an appealing prayer.

"And what could have induced it?" came the question presently, as he let his hands fall.

"I had better tell you the whole from the beginning," said Bede, "you will then——"

"Tell it, of course," interrupted Mr. Greatorex. "Begin at the beginning."

Bede stood up, facing the fire; his elbow on the mantel-piece, his back partially turned to his father, while he told it: he did not care to watch the anguish and horror of the usually placid face. He concealed nothing: relating how he had reached the City and held an interview with his cousin; how he had left him after the lapse of an hour, promising to be with him in the morning before starting for town; and how he had been aroused from his bed by the tidings that John was dead. He described the state of the room when found; the pistol lying underneath the hand; the note on the table. As well as Bede Greatorex could repeat the details, as testified to before the coroner—and we may be very sure they were implanted with painful exactitude on his memory—he gave them all faithfully.

"It might have been an accident," urged Mr. Greatorex, in an imploring kind of tone, as if he wanted to be assured that it was.

Bede did not answer.

"I forgot the writing, Bede; I forgot the writing," said Mr. Greatorex, with a groan.

"Whatever it might be, whether accident or self-intended, it is an awful shame to bury him as they are going to do," burst forth Bede, in a sudden access of anger.

And the words served to tell Mr. Greatorex what the verdict had been.

"It is a sin, sir; yes, it is. I could not stay to see it."

"So it may be, Bede; but that's the least of it,—that's the least of it. I'd as soon have believed myself capable of such a thing as that John Ollivera was. Oh, John! John!"

A painful silence. Bede felt glad that his task was so far over.

"His motive, Bede? What could have been his motive?"

"There was no motive, father; as far as I can see."

"You were young men together, Bede; of the same pursuits—frequent companions; did you ever suspect he had any care, or embarrassment, or trouble?"

"No. He had none, I feel sure."

"Those first words of the note, as you have related them, sound curious," resumed Mr. Greatorex. "What was it that he was trying to accomplish?"

"We cannot discover; no clue whatever has come to light. It would almost seem as though he had written them to the air, without foundation."

"That would be to say his senses had deserted him."

"Kene thinks that the head-ache of which he had complained may have proceeded from some disordered function of the brain, and induced insanity."

"Do *you* think it?" asked Mr. Greatorex, looking at his son. "You were the last person who saw him alive."

"I should be glad to think it if I could. He was quite calm and collected when I was with him; just as usual."

"The extraordinary thing to me is, that nobody should have heard the discharge of the pistol."

"The people of the house were all out. Even the servant-girl had gone about the neighbourhood, gossiping."

"It might have been heard in the street."

"If the street were quiet, perhaps, yes. But on assize nights there is a good deal of out-door bustle."

Mr. Greatorex sat looking at the fire, and revolving the different points of the dreadful history. Bede resumed.

"I was wondering whether the worst of the details could be kept from my mother. They would try her terribly. She only thinks, as yet, I find, that he died suddenly."

"Because she only knows as much as your telegram said. It will be impossible to keep it from her; the newspapers will be full of it. Three times to-day has your mother sent down for *The Times*, and I have returned an excuse. There's no help for it, Bede."

"Then you shall tell her, sir. I can't. It must be broken to her by degrees. How was it William Ollivera was so late in coming down?" he suddenly resumed. "He only arrived to-day as I was departing."

"William Ollivera was out of town, and did not return until last night. You have said nothing about our cause, Bede."

"That's all right. It was taken yesterday afternoon. Kene led in the place of John, and we got the verdict."

"Where are John's papers and things?"

"His brother and Frank will take charge of them. I thought it best to come up to you at once, knowing you were in suspense."

"A suspense that has been grievous since I read that paragraph this morning, Bede. I have been fit for nothing."

Neither was Bede that day. Mr. Greatorex rose to go to his wife's room, there to enter upon his task,—just as his son had been entering

upon it with him. Bede paced the carpet for a few minutes alone. It was a long room; the furniture not dark and heavy, but light-looking, and pleasant to the eye, though comprising all the requisites for a well-appointed dining-room. Bede took a look at himself in the pier-glass, and pushed his hair off his forehead,—his sisters used to accuse him of inordinate vanity—and then quitted the room and the house.

He was bending his steps to Lincoln's Inn, to the chambers occupied by his cousin. Not many yards had he gone, before some one darted across the street and pounced upon him.

"Halloa, Greatorex! What's this, that's up about Ollivera?"

It was a chancery barrister, who had known John Ollivera well. Bede Greatorex explained in a few short words, and hurried off.

"I can't stay to tell you more now," he said, in apology. "There's a great deal to do and to be thought; and I hardly know whether our heads are on our shoulders or off. I'm on my way to his chambers to search if there may be any paper, or aught else, that can throw light on it."

A hansom passed at the moment, and Bede jumped into it. He might have met fifty questioners, else, and reached his destination after dark. The chambers were on the third floor, and he went up to them. Mr. Ollivera's clerk, a small youth of nineteen, was at his post; and the laundress, who waited on Mr. Ollivera, was there also. The news had brought her up in tears.

Perhaps it was excusable that they should both begin upon Mr. Bede Greatorex in their thirst for information. Respectfully, of course, but eagerly. He responded in a few quiet words, and passed into the rooms, the woman's sobs following him.

Here was the sitting-room where John saw people; next to it his bed-room; all in neat order. Near the bed was a small mahogany stand, and a cushioned chair. On the stand lay his Bible,—just as the other one was seen but yesterday resting on its stand elsewhere. Bede knew that his cousin never failed to read that Bible, and to fall on his knees before the chair, morning and evening. He turned away with a groan, and proceeded to his work of search.

Only a casual search to-day: there was no time for minute examination. Just a look here and there, lest haply he might come upon some paper or letter of elucidation. But he could not find any.

"I am going to lock the rooms up, Jenner," he said to the clerk. "Things must be left as they are until the Reverend Mr. Ollivera comes to town. He will have the arrangement of matters. I don't suppose there's any will."

"Am I to leave the service at once, sir?—now?" asked Mr. Jenner, in excessive surprise.

"You must leave the rooms now—unless you would like to be locked up in them," returned Bede Greatorex. "Call in Bedford

Square to-morrow morning; we may be able to recommend you to something: and perhaps you will be wanted here again for a few days."

They quitted the chambers together; and Mr. Bede Greatorex took possession of the key. "I suppose," he said to the clerk, as they went down, "that you never observed any peculiarity of manner in Mr. Ollivera that might tend to induce suspicion of aberration of mind?"

The young man turned round and stared, scarcely taking in the sense of the question. Certainly there had not been anything of the kind observable in Mr. Ollivera.

"He was cheerful and sensible always, sir: he didn't seem to have a care."

Bede sighed, and proceeded homeward. A recollection came over him, as he went along in the dusk, of the last evening he had walked home from his cousin's chambers; it was only the night before John had gone on circuit. Oh, the contrast between that time and this! And Bede thought, in the bitter grief and sorrow of the moment, that he would willingly forfeit his own life could he recall that of John Ollivera.

CHAPTER V.

MR. BUTTERBY IN PRIVATE LIFE.

THE bustle of the assizes was over; the tramp and tread and hum had gone out of the streets; the judges, the barristers, and the rest of the transitory visitors had departed to hold their assize at the next county town.

A great deal of the bustle and the hum of another event had also subsided. It does not linger very long when outward proceedings are over, and sensational adjuncts have ceased; and Mr. Ollivera, at the best, had been but a stranger. The grave where he lay had its visitors still; but his brother and other friends had left for London, carrying his few effects with them. Nothing remained to tell of the fatal act of the past Monday evening; but for that grave, it might have seemed never to have had place in reality.

The Reverend Mr. Ollivera had been firm in refusing to admit belief in his brother's guilt. He did not pretend to judge how it might have happened, whether by accident or by some enemy's hand; but he felt convinced the death could not have been deliberately self-inflicted. It was an impossibility, he avowed to Mr. Butterby—and he was looked upon, by that renowned officer, as next door to a lunatic for his pains. There was no more shadow of a doubt on Mr. Butterby's mind that the verdict had been in accordance with the facts, than there was on other people's.

Always excepting Alletha Rye's. She had been silent to the public since the avowal at the grave; but, in a dispute with Mrs. Jones, had repeated her assertion and belief. Upon a report of the display coming to Mrs. Jones's ears, that discreet matron—who certainly erred on the side of hard, correct, matter-of-fact propriety if, on any—attacked her sister in no measured terms. There were several years between them, and Mrs. Jones considered she had a right to do it. Much as Mrs. Jones had respected Mr. Ollivera in life, she entertained no doubt whatever on the subject of his death.

"My opinion is, you must have been crazy," came the sharp reprimand. "Go off after that tramping tail to the grave! I wish I'd seen you start. A good name's easier lost than regained, Alletha Rye."

"I am not afraid of losing mine," was the calm rejoinder.

"Folks seldom are till they find it gone," said Mrs. Jones, tartly. "My goodness! not content with trapesing off there in the middle of the night, you must go and make an exhibition of yourself besides! kneeling down on the damp earth to pray, in the face and eyes of all the people; and then rising to make a proclamation, just as if you had been the town bellman! Jones says it struck him dumb."

Alletha Rye was silent. Perhaps she had felt vexed since, that the moment's excitement had led her to the act.

"Who are *you*, that you should put yourself up against the verdict?" resumed Mrs. Jones. "Are you cleverer and sharper than the jury, and the coroner, and me, and Mr. Ollivera's friends, and the rest of the world, all of us put together? There can't be a *doubt* upon the point, girl."

"Let it drop," said Alletha, with a shiver.

"Drop! I'd like to see it drop. I'd like the remembrance of it to drop out of men's minds, but you've took care that sha'n't be. What on earth induced you to go and do it?"

"It was a dreadful thing that Mr. Ollivera should lie under the imputation of having killed himself," came the answer, after a pause.

"Now, you just explain yourself, Alletha Rye. You keep harping on that same string, about Mr. Ollivera; what grounds have you for it?"

The girl's pale face flushed all over. "None," she presently answered. "I've never said I had grounds. But there's that vivid dream upon me always. He seemed to reproach me for not having sooner gone into the room to find him; and I'm sure no self-murderer would do that. They'd rather lie undiscovered for ever. Had I kept silence," she passionately added, "I might have become haunted."

Mrs. Jones stared at the speaker with all the fiery fervour of her dark, dark eyes.

"Haunted! Haunted by what?"

"By Mr. Ollivera's spirit ; by remorse. Remorse for not doing as I am sure he is wishing me to do—clear his memory."

Mrs. Jones lifted her hands in wonder, and for once made no retort. She began to question in real earnest whether the past matters had not turned her sister's brain.

Mr. Jones was present during this passage-at-arms, which took place on the Thursday, after breakfast. He had just been enduring a battery of tongue on his own score ; various sins, great and small, being placed before him in glaring colours by his wife, not the least heinous of which was the having arrived home from his pleasure trip at the unseasonable hour of half after one o'clock in the morning. In recrimination he had intimated that others of the family could come in at that hour as well as himself ; not to do Alletha Rye harm, for he was a good-natured man, as people given to plenty of peccadilloes are apt to be ; but, to make his own crime appear the less. And then it all came out ; and Mrs. Jones's ears were regaled with Alletha Rye's share in the doings at the interment.

On this same Thursday, but very much later in the day, Frank Greatorex and the Reverend Mr. Ollivera departed from the city, having stayed to collect together the papers and other effects of the deceased gentleman. Which brings us (the night having passed and a great portion of the ensuing day) to the opening of the chapter.

Mr. Butterby sat in his parlour : one of two rooms he occupied on the ground floor of a private house very near a populous part of the city. He was not a police-sergeant ; he was not an inspector ; people did not know what he was. That he held sway at the police-station, and was a very frequent visitor to it, everybody saw. But Mr. Butterby had been so long in the town, that speculation, though rife enough at first upon the point, had ceased as to what special relations he might hold with the law. When any one wanted important assistance, he could, if he chose, apply to Mr. Butterby, instead of to the regular police inspector ; and, to the mind of the sanguine inquirer, that application appeared to constitute a promise of success.

Mr. Butterby's parlour faced the street. Its one sash window, protected outside by shutters thrown back in the day, and by green dwarf venetian blinds and a white roller-blind inside, was not a very large one. Nevertheless Mr. Butterby contrived to keep a tolerable look-out from it on those of his fellow citizens who might chance to pass. He generally had the white blinds drawn down to meet, within an inch, the top of the venetian blinds ; and from that inch of outlet, Mr. Butterby, standing up before the window, was fond of taking observations. It was an unpretending room, with a faded carpet and rug on the floor ; a square table in the middle, a large bureau filled with papers in a corner ; some books in a case opposite, and a stock of newspapers on the top of

that; and a picture over the mantel-piece representing Eve offering the apple to Adam.

Mr. Butterby sat by the fire at his tea, taking it thoughtfully. He wore an old green coat with short tails sprouting out from the waist, not being addicted to fashion in private life, and a red-and-black check waistcoat. It was Friday evening and nearly dusk. He had been out on some business all the afternoon; but his thoughts were not fixed on that, though it was of sufficient importance; they rested on the circumstances attending the death of Mr. Ollivera.

Before the brother of the deceased quitted the town, he had kept an appointment with Mr. Butterby, having come to it accompanied by Frank Greatorrex; the fly, conveying them to the station, waiting at the door. The purport of his visit was to impress upon that officer his full conviction that the death was not a suicide, and to request that, if anything should arise to confirm his opinion, it might be followed up.

"He was a good, pure-minded man; he was of calm, clear, practical mind, of sound good sense; he was fond of his profession, anxious to excel in it; hopeful, earnest, and without a care in the world," urged the Reverend Mr. Ollivera, with emotion. "How, sir, I ask you, could such a man take away his own life?"

Mr. Butterby shook his head. It might be unlikely, he acknowledged; but it was not impossible.

"I tell you it is impossible," said Mr. Ollivera. "I hold a full, firm, positive conviction that my brother never died, or could have died, by his own wilful hands: the certainty of it in my mind is so clear as to be like a revelation from heaven. Do you know what I did, sir? I went to the grave at night after he was put into it, and read the burial service over him."

"I see you doing it," came the unexpected answer of Mr. Butterby. "The surplice you wore was too long for you and covered your boots."

"It belonged to a taller man than I am—the Reverend Mr. Yorke," the clergyman explained. "But now, sir, do you suppose I should have dared to hold that sacred service over a man who had wilfully destroyed himself?"

"But instead of there being proof that he did not wilfully destroy himself, there's every proof that he did," argued Mr. Butterby.

"Every apparent proof; I admit that; but I know—I know that the proofs are in some strange way false; not real."

"The death was real; the pistol was real; the writing on the note-paper was real."

"I know. I cannot pretend to explain where the explanation may be hidden; I cannot see how or whence elucidation shall come. One suggestion I will make to you, Mr. Butterby. It is not clear that no person got access to the drawing-room after the departure from it of Mr. Bede Greatorrex. At least, to my mind. I only mention this thought,"

concluded Mr. Ollivera, rising to close the interview; for he had no time to prolong it. "Should you succeed in gleanng anything, address a communication to me, to the care of Greatorex and Greatorex."

"Stop a moment," cried Mr. Butterby, as they were going out. "Who holds the paper that was found on the table?"

"I do," said Frank Greatorex. "Some of them would have had it destroyed; Kene and my brother amidst them; they could not bear to look at it. But I thought my father might like to see it first, and took possession of it."

A smile crossed the lips of the police agent. "Considering the two gentlemen you mention are in the law, it doesn't say much for their forethought, to rush at destroying the only proof there may be of anybody else's being guilty."

"But then, you know, they do not admit that any one else could have been guilty," replied Frank Greatorex. "At least, my brother does not; and Kene only looks upon it as a possible case of insanity. Do you want to see the paper? I have it in my pocket."

"Perhaps you'd not mind leaving it with me for a day or two," said Mr. Butterby. "I'll forward it up safe to you when I've done with it."

Frank Greatorex took the paper from his pocket-book and handed it to the speaker. It was folded inside an envelope now. Mr. Butterby received possession of it and attended his guests to the door, where the fly was waiting.

"You'll have to drive fast, Thompson," he said to the man. And Thompson, touching his hat to the officer, who was held in some awe by the city natives, whipped his horse into a canter.

It was upon this interview that Mr. Butterby ruminated as he took his tea on the Friday evening. In his own opinion it was the most unreasonable thing in the world that anybody should throw doubt upon the verdict. Nothing but perversity. He judged it—and he was a keen-sighted man—to be fully in accordance with the facts, as given in evidence. Excepting perhaps in one particular. Had he been on the jury he should have held out for a verdict of insanity.

"They are but a set of bumble-heads at the best," soliloquised Mr. Butterby, respectfully alluding to the twelve men who had returned the verdict, as he took a large bite out of his last piece of well-buttered pikelet. "Juries for the most part always are: if they have got any brains they send 'em a wool-gathering then. Hemming, the butter-and-cheese man, told me he did say something about insanity; and he was foreman, too; but the rest of 'em and the coroner wouldn't listen to it. It don't much matter, for he got the burial rites after all, poor fellow: but if I'd been them, I should have gave him the benefit of the doubt."

Stopping in his observations to put the rest of the pikelet in his mouth, Mr. Butterby went on again as he ate it.

"It might have been that, insanity; but as to the other suspicion,

there's no grounds whatever for it on the face of things at present. If such is to be raised I shall have to set to work and hunt 'em up. Create 'em as it were. 'Don't spare money,' says that young clergyman last night when he sat here; 'your expenses shall be reimbursed to you with interest.' As if I could make a case out of nothing! I'm not a French Procureur-Imperial."

Drinking down his tea at a draught, Mr. Butterby tried the tea-pot, lest a drop might be left in it still, turning it nearly upside down in the process. The result was that the lid came open and a shower of tea-leaves descended on the tray.

"Bother!" said Mr. Butterby, as he hastily set the tea-pot in its place, and went on with his arguments.

"There's something odd about the case, though, straightforward as it seems; and I've thought so from the first. That girl's dream, for example, which *she* says she had; and her conduct at the grave. It's curious that Dicky Jones should just be looking on at her," added Mr. Butterby, slightly diverging from the direct line of consecutive thought: "curious that Dicky should have come up then at all. First, Alletha Rye vows he didn't do it; and, next, the parson vows it, Reverend Ollivera. Kene, too—but he points to insanity; and now the young fellow, Francis Greateorex. Suppose I go over the case again?"

Stretching out his hand, Mr. Butterby pulled the bell-rope—an old-fashioned twisted blue cord with a handle at the end; and a young servant came in.

"Shut the shutters," said he.

While this was in process, he took two candles from the mantel-piece, and lighted them. The girl went away with the tea-tray. He then unlocked his bureau, and from one of its pigeon-holes brought forth a few papers, memoranda and the like, which he studied in silence, one after the other.

"The parson's right," he began presently; "if there is a loophole it's where he said—that somebody got into the room after the departure of Mr. Greateorex. Let's sum the points up."

Drawing his chair close to the table on which the papers lay, Mr. Butterby began to tell the case through, striking his two fore-fingers alternatively on the table's edge as each point came flowing from his tongue. Not that "flowing" is precisely the best word to apply, for his speech was thoughtfully slow, and the words dropped with hesitation.

"John Ollivera, counsel-at-law. He comes in on the Saturday with the other barristers, ready for the 'sizes. Has a cause or two coming on at 'em in which he expects to shine. Goes to former lodgings at Jones's, and shows himself as full of sense and sanity as usual; and he'd got his share of both. Spends Saturday evening at his friend's, Mrs. Jolliffe's, the colonel's widow; is sweet, Mrs. Jones thinks, on one of the

young ladies. Gets home at ten like a decent man, works at his papers till twelve, and goes to bed."

Mr. Butterby made a pause here, both his fingers resting on the table. Giving a nod, as if his reflections were satisfactory, he lifted his hands and began again.

"Sunday. Attends public worship and takes the sacrament. *That's* not like the act of one who knows he is on the eve of a bad deed. Attends again, after breakfast, with the judges, and hears the sheriff's chaplain preach. (And it was not a bad sermon, as sermons go," critically pronounced Mr. Butterby in a parenthesis). "Attends again in the afternoon to hear the anthem, the Miss Jolliffes with him. Dines at Jones's at five, spends evening at Jolliffes'. Home early, and to bed."

Once more the hands were lifted. Once more their owner paused in thought. He gave two nods this time, and resumed.

"Monday. Up before eight. Has his breakfast (bacon and eggs), and goes to the Nisi Prius Court. Stays there till past three in the afternoon, tells Kene he must go out of court to keep an appointment that wasn't a particularly pleasant one; and *goes* out. Arrives at Jones's at half-past four; passes Mrs. Jones in that there small back hall of theirs; she tells him he looks tired; answers that he *is* tired and has got a headache; court was close. Goes up to his sitting-room and gets his papers about; (papers found afterwards, on examination, to relate to the cause coming on on Tuesday morning.) Girl takes up his dinner; he eats it, gets to his papers again, and she fetches things away. Rings for his lamp early, quarter past six may be, nearly daylight still; while girl puts it on table, draws down blinds himself as if in a hurry to be at work again. Close upon this Mr. Bede Greatorex calls, (good firm, that, Greatorex and Greatorex," interspersed Mr. Butterby, with professional candour). "Bede Greatorex has come down direct from London (sent by old Greatorex) to confer with Ollivera on the Tuesday's cause. Stays with him more than an hour. Makes an appointment with him for Tuesday morning. Jones's nephew, going up stairs at the time, hears them making it, and shows Mr. Bede Greatorex out. Might be half-past seven then, or two or three minutes over it; call it half-past Ollivera never seen again alive. Found dead next morning in arm chair; pistol fallen from right hand, shot penetrated heart. Same chair he had been sitting in when at his papers, but drawn aside now at corner of table. Alletha Rye finds him. Tells a cock-and-bull tale of having been frightened by a dream. Dreamt he was in the sitting-room dead, and goes to see (*she* says) that he was *not* there, dead. Finds him there dead, however, just as (*she* says) she saw him in her dream. Servant rushes out for doctor, meets me and I am the first in the room. Doctor comes; Kene comes, Jones's nephew fetching him; later they fetch Bede Greatorex. Doctor says death must have took place pre-

vious evening not later than eight o'clock. Mrs. Jones says lamp couldn't have burnt much more than an hour: is positive it didn't exceed an hour and a half; but she's one of the positive ones at all times, and women's judgment is fallible. Now then, let's stop."

Mr. Butterby put his hands one over the other, and looked down upon them, pausing before he spoke again.

"It draws the space into an uncommon narrow nutshell. When Bede Greatorex leaves at half past-seven, Ollivera is alive and well—as he and Jones's nephew both testify to—and, according to the evidence of the surgeon, and the negative testimony of the oil in the lamp, he is dead by eight. If he did not draw the pistol on himself, somebody came in and shot him.

"Did he draw it on himself? I say Yes. Coroner and jury say Yes. The public say Yes. Alletha Rye and the Reverend Greatorex say No. If we are all wrong—and I don't say but what there's just a loophole of possibility of it—and them two are right, why then it was murder. And done with uncommon craftiness. Let's look at the writing.

"Those high-class lawyers are not good for much in criminal cases, can't see an inch beyond their noses; they don't practise at the Old Bailey, they don't," remarked Mr. Butterby, as he took from the papers before him the unfinished note found on Mr. Ollivera's table, the loan of which he had begged from Frank Greatorex. "The idea of their proposing to destroy this, because 'they couldn't bear to look at it!' Kene, too; and Bede Greatorex! *they* might have known better. I'll take care of it now."

Holding it close to one of the candles, the detective scanned it long and intently, comparing the concluding words, uneven, blotted, as if written with an agitated hand, with the plain collected characters of the lines that were undoubtedly Mr. Ollivera's. When he did arrive at a conclusion it was a summary one, and he put down the paper with an emphatic thump.

"May I be shot myself if I believe the two writings *is* by the same hand!"

Mr. Butterby's surprise may plead excuse for his grammar. He had never, until this moment, doubted that the writing was all done by one person.

"I'll show this to an expert. People don't write the same at all times; they'll make their capitals quite different in the same day; as anybody with any experience knows. But they don't often make their small letters different—neither do men study to alter their usual formation of letters when about to shoot themselves; the pen does its work then spontaneous; naturally. These small letters are different, several of them, the *r*, the *p*, the *e*, the *o*, the *d*; all them are as opposite as light and dark, and I *don't* think the last was written by Mr. Ollivera."

It was a grave conclusion to come to; partially startling even him, who was too much at home with crime and criminals to be startled easily.

"Let's assume that it is so for a bit, and see how it works that way," resumed the officer. "We've all been mistaken, let's say; Ollivera did not shoot himself, some one goes in and shoots him. Was it man or woman; was it an inmate of the house, or not an inmate? How came it to be done? what was the leading cause? Was the pistol (lying convenient on the table) took up incidental in the course of talking and fired by misadventure?—Or did they get to quarrelling and the other shot him of malice?—Or was it a planned, deliberate murder, one stealing in to do it in cold blood? Halt a bit here, Jonas Butterby. The first—done in misadventure? No: if any honest man had so shot another, he'd be the first to run out and get a doctor to him. No. Disposed of. The second—done in malice during a quarrel? Yes; might have been. The third—done in planned deliberation? That would be the most likely of all, but for the fact (very curious fact in the supposition) of the pistol's having been Mr. Ollivera's and put (so to say) ready there to hand. Looking at it in either of these two views, there's mystery. The last in regard to the point now mentioned; the other in regard to the secrecy with which the intruder must have got in. If that dratted girl had been at her post indoors, as she ought to have been, with the chain of the door up, it might never have happened," concluded Mr. Butterby, with acrimony.

"Between half-past seven and eight? Needn't look much before or much beyond that hour. Girl says nobody went into the house at all, except Jones's nephew, and Jones's sister-in-law. Jones's nephew did not stay; he got his book and went off again at half-past seven, close on the heels of Bede Greathorex, Mr. Ollivera being then alive. Presently, nearer eight, Alletha Rye goes in, for a pattern, she says, and she stays upstairs, according to the girl's statement, a quarter of an hour."

Mr. Butterby came to a sudden pause. He faced the fire now, and sat staring into it as if he were searching for what he could not see.

"It does not take a quarter of an hour to get a pattern. I should say not. And there was her queer dream, too. Leastways, the queer assertion that she had a dream. Dreams, indeed!—moonshine. Did she invent that dream as an excuse for having gone into the room to find him? And then look at her persistence from the first that it was not a suicide! And her queer state of mind and manners since! Dicky Jones told me last night when I met him by the hop-market, that she says she's haunted by Mr. Ollivera's spirit. Why should she be, I wonder? I mean, why should she fancy it? It's odd; very odd. The young woman, up to now, has always shown out sensible, in the short while this city has known her.

"That Godfrey Pitman," resumed the speaker. "The way that man's name got brought up by the servant-girl was sudden. I should like to know who he is and what his business might have been. He was in hiding; that's what he was; stopping in-doors for a cold and a relaxed throat! No doubt! But it does not follow that because he might have been in some trouble of his own, he had anything to do with the other business; and, in fact, he couldn't have had, leaving by the five o'clock train for Birmingham. So we'll dismiss *him*."

"And now for the result?" concluded Mr. Butterby, with great deliberation. "The result is that I feel inclined to think the young parson may be right in saying it was not a suicide. What it *was*, I can't yet make my mind up to give an opinion upon. Suppose I inquire into things a bit in a quiet manner?—and, to begin with, I'll make a friendly call on Dicky Jones and madam. She won't answer anything that it does not please her to, and it never pleases her to be questioned; on the other hand, what she does choose to say is to be relied upon, for she'd not tell a lie to save herself from hanging. As to Dicky—with that long tongue of his, he can be pumped dry."

Mr. Butterby locked up his papers, changed his ornamental coat for a black one, flattened down the coal on his fire, blew out the candles, took his hat, and went away.

CHAPTER VI.

GODFREY PITMAN.

MRS. JONES was in her parlour, doing nothing; with the exception of dropping a tart observation from her lips occasionally. As the intelligent reader cannot have failed to observe, tartness in regard to tongue was essentially an element of Mrs. Jones's nature: when anything occurred to annoy her its signs increased four-fold; and something had just happened to annoy her very exceedingly.

The parlour was not large, but convenient and well fitted-up. A good fire burnt in the grate, throwing its ruddy light on the bright colours of the crimson carpet and hearth-rug; on the small sideboard, with its array of glass; on the horsehair chairs, on the crimson cloth covering the centre table, and finally on Mrs. Jones herself and on her sister.

Mrs. Jones sat at the table, some work before her, in the shape of sundry packages of hosiery, brought in from the shop to be examined, sorted, and put to rights. But she was not doing it. Miss Rye sat on the other side the table, stitching the seams of a gown-body by the light of the moderator lamp. The shop was just closed.

It had happened that Mr. Jones, about tea-time that evening, had strayed into his next-door neighbour's to get a chat: of which light interludes to business Mr. Jones was uncommonly fond. The bent of

the conversation fell, naturally enough, on the recent calamity in Mr. Jones's house: in fact, Mr. Jones found his neighbour devouring the full account of it in the Friday evening weekly newspaper, just damp from the press. A few minutes, and back went Mr. Jones to his own parlour, his mouth full of news: the purport of which was that the lodger, Godfrey Pitman, who had been supposed to leave the house at half-past four, to take the Birmingham train, did not really quit it until some two or three hours later.

It had not been Mrs. Jones if she had refrained from telling her husband to hold his tongue for a fool; and of asking furthermore whether he had been drinking or dreaming. Upon which Mr. Jones gave his authority for what he said. Their neighbour, Thomas Cause, had watched the lodger go away later with his own eyes.

Mr. Cause, a quiet tradesman getting in years, was fetched in, and a skirmish ensued. He asserted that he had seen the lodger come out of the house and go up the street by lamplight, carrying his blue bag; and he persisted in the assertion in spite of Mrs. Jones's tongue. She declared he had *not* seen anything of the sort; that either his spectacles or the street lights had deceived him. And neither of them would give in to the other.

Leaving matters in this unsatisfactory state, the neighbour went out again. Mrs. Jones exploded a little, and then had leisure to look at her sister, who had sat still and silent during the discussion. Still and silent she remained; but her face had turned white, and her eyes wore a wild, frightened expression.

"What on earth's the matter with *you*?" demanded Mrs. Jones.

"Nothing," said Miss Rye, catching hold of her work with nervous, trembling fingers. "Only I can't bear to hear it spoken of."

"If Mr. Pitman didn't go away till later, that accounts for the tallow-grease in his room," suddenly interposed Susan Marks, who had been passing in and out of the parlour, and so caught the thread of the matter in dispute. Mrs. Jones turned upon her.

"I didn't see it till this afternoon," explained the girl. "With all the commotion there has been in the house, I never as much as opened the room-door till to-day since Mr. Pitman went out of it. The first thing I see was the carpet covered in drops of tallow-grease; a whole colony of them: and I know they were not there on the Monday afternoon. They be there still."

Mrs. Jones went upstairs at once, the maid following her. Sure enough the grease drops were there. Some lay on the square piece of carpet, some on the boarded floor; but all were very near together. The candlestick and candle, from which they had no doubt dropped, stood on the wash-hand-stand at Mrs. Jones's elbow, as she wrathfully gazed.

"He must have been lighting of his candle sideways," remarked the

girl to her mistress ; " or else have held it askew while hunting for something on the floor. If he stopped as late as old Cause says, why in course he'd need a candle."

Mrs. Jones went down again, her temper by no means improved. She did not like to be deceived or treated as though she were nobody ; neither did she choose that her house should be played with. If the lodger missed his train (as she now supposed he might have done) and came back to wait for a later one, his duty was to have announced himself, and asked leave to stay. In spite, however, of the tallow, and of Mr. Cause, she put but little faith in the matter. Shortly after this, there came a ring at the side-door, and Mr. Butterby's voice was heard in the passage.

" Don't say anything to him about it," said Miss Rye, hastily, in a low tone.

" About what ? " demanded Mrs. Jones aloud.

" About that young man's not going away as soon as we thought he did. It's nothing to him."

There was no time for more. Mr. Butterby was shown in, and came forward with a small present for Mrs. Jones. It was only a bunch of violets ; but Mrs. Jones, in spite of her tartness, was fond of flowers, and received them graciously : calling to Susan to bring a wine-glass of water.

" I passed a chap, at the top of High Street, with a basket-full ; he said he'd sold but two bunches all the evening, so I took a bunch," explained Mr. Butterby. " It was that gardener's man, Reed, who met with the accident and has been unfit for work since. Knowing you liked violets, Mrs. Jones, I thought I'd just call in with them."

He sat down in the chair offered him by the fire, putting his hat in the corner behind. Miss Rye, after saluting him, had resumed work, and sat with her face turned to the table, partially away from his view : Mrs. Jones, at the other side of the table, faced him.

" Where's Jones ? " asked Mr. Butterby.

" Jones is off as usual," replied Jones's wife. " No good to ask where *he* is after the shop's shut ; often not before it."

It was an unlucky question, bringing back all the acrimony which the violets had partially soothed away. Mr. Butterby coughed, and began talking of recent events in a sociable, friendly manner, just as if he had been Mrs. Jones's brother, and never in his life heard of such a rare animal as a detective.

" It's an uncommon annoying thing to have had happen in your house, Mrs. Jones ! As if it couldn't as well have took place in anybody else's ! There's enough barristers lodging in the town at assize time, I hope. But there ! luck's everything. I'd have given five shillings out of my pocket to have stopped it."

" So would I ; for his sake as well as for mine," was Mrs. Jones's



Detective Butterby offers Mrs. Jones a bunch of violets.

answer. And she seized one of the paper parcels and jerked off the string.

"Have you had any more dreams, Miss Rye?"

"No," replied Miss Rye, holding her stitching closer to the light for a moment. "That one was enough."

"Dreams is curious things, not to be despised," observed crafty Mr. Butterby; than whom there was not a man living despised dreams, as well as those who professed to have them, more than he. "But I've knowed so-called dreams to be nothing in the world but waking thoughts. Are you sure that one of yours was a dream, Miss Rye?"

"I would rather not talk of it, if you please," she said. "Talking cannot bring Mr. Ollivera back to life."

"What makes you persist in thinking he did not kill himself?"

Mr. Butterby had gradually edged his chair forward on the hearth-rug, so as to obtain a side view of Miss Rye's face. Perhaps he was surprised, perhaps not, to see it suddenly flush, and then become deadly pale.

"Just you look here, Miss Rye. If he did not do it, somebody else did. And I should like to glean a little insight as to whether or not there are grounds for that new light; if there's any to be gleaned."

"Why, what on earth! are *you* taking up that crotchet, Butterby?"

The interruption came from Mrs. Jones. That goes without telling, as the French say. Mr. Butterby turned to warm his hands at the blaze, speaking mildly enough to disarm an enemy.

"Not I. I should like to show your sister that her suspicions are wrong: she'll worrit herself into a skeleton, else. See here: whatever happened, and however it happened, it must have been between half-past seven and eight. You were in the place part of that half-hour Miss Rye, and heard nobody."

"I have already said so."

"Shut up in your room at the top of the house; looking for—what was it?—a parcel."

"A pattern. A pattern of a sleeve. But I had to open parcels, for I could not find it, and stayed searching. It had slipped between one drawer and another at the back."

"It must have took you some time," remarked Mr. Butterby, keeping his face and one eye on the genial fire and the other eye on Miss Rye.

"I suppose it did. Susan says I was up stairs a quarter of an hour, but I don't think it was so long as that. Eight o'clock struck after I got back to Mrs. Wilson's."

Mr. Butterby paused. Miss Rye resumed after a minute.

"I don't think anyone could have come in legitimately without my hearing them on the stairs. My room is not at the top of the house, it is on the same floor as Mrs. Jones's; the back room, immediately over the bed-room that was occupied by Mr. Ollivera. My door was

open, and the drawers in which I was searching stood close to it. If any——”

“What d’ye mean by legitimate?” interrupted Mr. Butterby, turning to take a full look at the speaker.

“Openly; with the noise one usually makes in coming up stairs. But if any one crept up secretly, of course I should not have heard it. Susan persists in declaring she never lost sight of the front door at all; I don’t believe her.”

“Nobody does believe her,” snapped Mrs. Jones, with a fling at the socks. “She confesses now that she ran in twice or thrice to look to the fires.”

“Oh! she does, does she,” cried Mr. Butterby. “Leaving the door open, I suppose?”

“Leaving it to take care of itself. She says she shut it; I say I know she didn’t. Put it at the best, it was not fastened; and anybody might have opened it and walked in, that had a mind to, and robbed the house.”

“The visitor, sitting so unobtrusively by the fire, thought he discerned a little glimmer of possibility breaking in amidst the utter darkness.

“But, as the house was not robbed, why we must conclude nobody did come in,” he observed. “As to the verdict—I don’t see, yet, any reason for Miss Rye’s disputing it. Mr. Ollivera was a favourite, I suppose.”

The remark did not please Miss Rye. Her cheek flushed, her work fell, and she rose from her seat to turn on Mr. Butterby.

“The verdict was a wrong verdict. Mr. Ollivera was a good and brave and just man: never a better went out of the world.”

“If I don’t believe you were in love with him!” cried Mr. Butterby.

“Perhaps I was,” came the unexpected answer; but the speaker seemed to be in too much agitation to heed greatly what she said. “It would not have hurt either him or me.”

Gathering her work, cotton, scissors in her hands, she went out of the room. At the same moment, there arrived a couple of visitors, come, without ceremony, to get an hour’s chat with Mrs. Jones. Catching up his hat, Mr. Butterby dexterously slipped out and disappeared.

The street was tolerably empty. He took up his position at the edge of the pavement facing the house, and surveyed it critically. As if he did not know all its aspects by heart! Some few yards higher up, the houses of Mr. Cause and the linendraper alone intervening, there was a side opening, bearing the euphonious title of Bear Entry, which led right into an obscure part of the town. By taking this, and executing a few turnings and windings, the railway station might be approached without touching on the more public streets.

"Yes," said the police agent to himself, calculating possibilities, "that's how it might have been done. Not that it was, though: I'm only putting it. A fellow might have slipped out of the door while that girl was in at her fires, cut down Bear Entry, double back again along Goose Lane, and so gain the rail."

Turning up the street with a brisk step, Mr. Butterby found himself face to face with Thomas Cause, who was standing within the shade of his side door. Exceedingly affable when it suited him to be so, he stopped to say a good evening.

"How d'ye do, Cause? A fine night, isn't it?"

"Lovely weather; shall pay for it later. Has she recovered her temper yet?" continued Mr. Cause. "I saw you come out."

Which was decidedly a rather mysterious addition to the answer. Mr. Butterby naturally enquired what it might mean, and had his ears gratified with the story of Godfrey Pitman's later departure, and of Mrs. Jones's angry disbelief in it. Never had those ears listened more keenly.

"Are you sure it was the man?" he asked, cautiously.

"If it wasn't him it was his ghost," said Mr. Cause. "I was standing here on the Monday night, just a step or two for'arder on the pavement, little thinking that a poor gentleman was shooting himself within a few yards of me, and saw a man come out of Jones's side door. When he was close up, I knew him in a moment for the same traveller, with the same blue bag in his hand, I saw go in with Miss Rye on the Sunday week previous. He came out of the house quietly, his head pushed forward at first, looking up the street and down the street, and then turned out sharp, whisked past me as hard as he could walk, and went down Bear Entry. It seemed to me that he didn't care to be seen."

But that detectives' hearts are too hard for emotion, this one's might have beaten a little faster as he listened. It was so exactly what he had been fancifully tracing to himself as the imaginary course of a guilty man. Stealing out of the house down Bear Entry, and so up to the railway station!

"What time was it?"

"What time is it now?" returned Mr. Cause: and the other took out his watch.

"Five-and-thirty minutes past seven."

"Then it was as nigh the same time on Monday night, as nigh as nigh can be. I shut up my shop at the usual hour, and I stood here afterwards just about as long as I've stood here now. I like to take a breath of fresh air, Mr. Butterby, when the labours of the day are over."

"Fresh air's good for all of us—that can get it," said Mr. Butterby, with a sniff at the air around him. "What sort of a looking man was this Godfrey Pitman?"

"A well-grown, straight man ; got a lot of black hair about his face ; whiskers, and beard, and moustachios."

"Young?"

"Thirty, perhaps. In reading the account in the *Herald* this evening, I saw Jones's folks gave evidence that he had left at half-past four to catch the Birmingham train. I told Jones it was a mistake, and he told his wife ; and didn't she fly out ! As if she need have put herself in a tantrum over that ; 'twas a matter of no consequence."

In common with the rest of the town, not a gleam of suspicion that the death was otherwise than the verdict pronounced it to be, had been admitted by Mr. Cause. He went on enlarging on the grievance of Mrs. Jones's attack upon him.

"She'd not hear a word : Jones fetched me in there. She told me to my face that, between spectacles and the deceitful rays of street lamps, one come to my age was unable to distinguish black from white, round from square. She said I must have mistaken the gentleman, Mr. Greatorex, for Godfrey Pitman, or else Jones's nephew, both of them having gone out about the same time. I couldn't get in a word edgeways, I assure you, Mr. Butterby, and Dicky Jones can bear me out that I couldn't. Let it go ; 'tis of no moment ; I don't care to quarrel with my neighbours' wives."

Mr. Butterby thought it was of a great deal of moment. He changed the conversation to something else with apparent carelessness, and then took a leisurely departure. Turning off at the top of High Street, he increased his pace, and went direct to the railway station.

The most intelligent porter employed there was a man named Hall. It was his duty to be on the platform when trains were starting ; and, as the detective had previous cause to know, few of those who did depart escaped his observation. The eight o'clock train for London was on the point of departure. Mr. Butterby waited under some sheds until it had gone.

Now for Hall, thought he. As if to echo the words, the first person to approach the sheds was Hall himself. In a diplomatic way, Mr. Butterby, when he had made known his presence, began putting enquiries about a matter totally foreign to the one he had come upon.

"By the way, Hall," he suddenly said, when the man thought he was done with, "there was a friend of mine went away last Monday evening, but I'm not sure by which train. I wonder if you happened to see him here ? A well-grown, straight man, with black beard and whiskers—about thirty."

Hall considered, and shook his head. "I've no recollection of any one of that description, sir."

"Got a blue bag in his hand. He might have went by the five o'clock train, or later. At eight most likely ; this hour, you know."

"Was he going to London or the other way, sir ?"

"Can't tell you. Try and recollect."

"Monday?—Monday?" cried Hall, endeavouring to recal what he could. "I ought to remember that night, sir, the one of the calamity in High Street; but the fact is, one day is so much like another here, it's hard to single out any in particular."

"Were you on duty last Sunday week, in the afternoon?"

"Yes, sir; it was my Sunday on."

"The man I speak of arrived by train that afternoon, then. You must have seen him."

"So I did," said the porter, suddenly. "Just the man you describe, sir; and I remember that it struck me I had seen his face somewhere before. It might have been only fancy; I had not much of a look at him; he got mixed with the other passengers, and went away quickly. I recollect the blue bag."

"Just so; all right. Now then, Hall: did you see him leave last Monday evening?"

"I never saw him, to my recollection, since the time of his arrival. Stop a bit. A blue bag? Why, it was a blue bag that—And that was Monday evening. Wait an instant, sir. I'll fetch Bill."

Leaving the detective to make the most of these detached sentences, Hall hurried off before he could be stopped. Mr. Butterby turned his face to the wall, and read the placards there.

When Hall came back he had a lad with him. And possibly it might have been well for that lad's equanimity, that he was unconscious the spare man studying the advertisements, was the city's renowned detective, Mr. Butterby.

"Now then," said Hall, "you tell this gentleman about your getting that there ticket, Bill."

"'Twas last Monday evening," began the boy, thus enjoined, "and we was waiting to start the eight o'clock train. In that there dark corner, I comes upon a gentleman sot down upon the bench; which he called to me, he did, and says, says he, 'This bag's heavy,' says he, 'and I don't care to carry it further nor I can help, nor yet to leave it,' says he, 'for it's got val'able papers in it,' says he; 'if you'll go and get my ticket for me,' says he, 'third class to Oxford,' says he, 'I'll give you sixpence,' says he: which I did, and took it to him," concluded the speaker; "and he give me the sixpence."

"Did he leave by the train?"

"Why in course he did," was the reply. "He got into the last third class at the tail o' the train, him and his bag: which were blue, it were."

"An old gentleman, with white hair, was it," asked Mr. Butterby, carelessly.

The boy's round eyes opened. "White hair! Why, 'twas as black as ink. And his beard, too. He warn't old; he warn't."

Mr. Butterby walked home, ruminating; stirred up his fire when he arrived, lighted his candles, for he had a habit of waiting on himself, and sat down, ruminating still. Sundry notes and bits of folded paper had been delivered for him from his confrères at the police-station—in Mr. Butterby will not be offended at our classing them with him as such—but he pushed them from him, never opening one. He did not even change his coat for the elegant green-tailed habit, economically adopted for home attire, and he was rather particular in doing so in general. No: Mr. Butterby's mind was ill at ease: not in the sense, be it understood, as applied to ordinary mortals; but things were puzzling him.

To give Mr. Butterby his due, he was sufficiently keen of judgment; though he had made mistakes occasionally. Taking the surface of things only, he might have jumped to the conclusion that a certain evil deed had been committed by Godfrey Pitman; diving into them, and turning them about in his practised mind, he saw enough to cause him to doubt and hesitate.

"The man's name's as much Pitman as mine is," quoth he, as he sat looking into the fire, a hand on each knee. "He arrives here on a Sunday, accosts a stranger he meets accidentally in turning out of the station, which happened to be Alletha Rye, and gets her to accommodate him with a week's private lodgings. Thought, she says, the house she was standing at was hers: and it's likely he did. The man was afraid of being seen, was flying from pursuit, and dared not risk the publicity of an inn. Stays in the house nine days, and never stirs out all the mortal time. Makes an excuse of a cold and relaxed throat for stopping in; which *was* an excuse," emphatically repeated the speaker. "Takes leave on the Monday at half-past four, and goes out to catch the Birmingham train. Is seen to go out. What brought him back?"

The question was not, apparently, easy to solve, for Mr. Butterby was a long while pondering it.

"He couldn't get back into the house up through the windows or down through the chimneys; not in any way but through the door. And the chances were that he might have been seen going in and coming out. No: don't think he went back to harm Mr. Ollivera. Rather inclined to say his announced intention of starting by the five o'clock train to Birmingham was a blind: he meant to go by the one at eight t'other way, and went back to wait for it, afraid of hanging about the station itself or loitering in the streets. It don't quite wash, neither, that; chances were he might have been seen coming back," debated Mr. Butterby.

"Wonder if he has anything to do with that little affair that has just turned up in Birmingham?" resumed the speaker, deviating to another thought. "Young man's wanted for that, George Winter: *might* have been this very self-same Godfrey Pitman; and of course might not. Let's get on.

"It don't stand to reason that he'd come in any such way into a town and stop a whole week at the top of a house for the purpose of harming Mr. Ollivera. Why, 'twas not till the Tuesday after Pitman was in, that the Joneses got the barrister's letter saying he was coming and would occupy his old rooms if they were vacant. No," decided Mr. Butterby: "Pitman was in trouble on his own score, and his mysterious movements had reference to that: as I'm inclined to think."

One prominent quality in Mr. Butterby was pertinacity. Let him take up an idea of his own accord, however faint, and it took a vast deal to get it out of him. An obstinate man was he in his self-conceit. Anybody who knew Mr. Butterby well, and could have seen his thoughts as in a glass, might have known he would be slow to take up the doubts against Godfrey Pitman, because he had already taken them up against another.

"I don't like it," he presently resumed. "Look at it in the best light, she knows something of the matter; more than she likes to be questioned about. Put the case, Jonas Butterby. Here's a sober, sensible, steady young woman, superior to half the women going, thinking only of her regular duties, nothing to conceal, open and cheerful as the day. That's how she was till this happened. And now? Goes home on the Monday night at nigh eleven o'clock (not to speak yet of what passed up to that hour), sits over the parlour-fire after other folks had went to bed, 'thinking,' as she puts it. Goes up later, can't sleep; drops asleep towards morning, and dreams that Mr. Ollivera's dead. Gets flurried at inquest (*I* saw it, though others mightn't); tramps to see him buried, stands on the fresh grave, and tells the public he did not commit suicide. How does she know he didn't? Come. Mrs. Jones is ten times sharper-sighted, and she has no doubt. Says next to her sister in confidence (and Dicky repeats it to me as a choice bit of gossip) that she's haunted by Ollivera's spirit.

"I don't like that," pursued Mr. Butterby, after a revolving pause. "When folks are haunted by dead men's spirits—leastways, fancy they are—it bodes a conscience not at rest in regard to the dead. To-night her face was pale and red by turns; her fingers shook so they had to clutch her work; she won't talk of it; she left the room to avoid me. And," continued Mr. Butterby, "she was the only one, so far as can be yet seen, that was for any length of time in the house between half-past seven and eight on Monday evening. A quarter of an hour finding a sleeve-pattern!

"I don't say it was her; I've not got as far as that yet, by a long way. I don't yet say it was not as the jury brought it in. But she was in the house for that quarter of an hour, unaccounting for her stay in accordance with any probability; and I'm inclined to think that Godfrey Pitman *must have been out of it before the harm was done*. Nevertheless, appearances is deceitful, deductions sometimes wrong,

and while I keep a sharp eye on the lady, I shall look *you* up, Mr. Godfrey Pitman."

One drawback against the "looking up" was—and Mr. Butterby felt slightly conscious of it as he rose from his seat before the fire—that he had never seen Godfrey Pitman in his life; and did not know whence he came or whither he might have gone.

END OF THE PROLOGUE.

(*To be continued.*)



THE BIRD IN THE LINDEN.

A LITTLE bird sang on a Linden tree,
In the balmy days of spring;
When his lay of love woke a voice in me,
And I essayed to sing.
The song of the bird was merry and glad,
As song of a bird might be;
My answering strain was mournful and sad,
At I sat 'neath that Linden tree.

For close by the bird on the Linden tree,
Perched a mate with folded wing;
But never a mate was there for me,
To listen whilst I might sing.
My spring was past, and my life was lone,
Love never had beamed on me;
I could not echo the joyous tone,
Of that bird on the Linden tree.

The little bird sang on the Linden tree,
When summer was warm and bright,
And, oh! I could answer his minstrelsy
With a song of deep delight.
For the heart I had long despaired to gain
Had blossomed with love for me,
Oh, joy! we were one who had once been twain,
And we sat 'neath that Linden tree.

MRS. G. LINNÆUS BANKS.

FRAU ANNA'S TABLE-COVER.

THIS remarkable piece of needle-work, having performed its benevolent office as I am about to relate, was rewarded by careful preservation. At last, through a chain of events which cannot be narrated here, it was bought by the English Government for the sum of eleven shillings and eightpence, and deposited in the South Kensington Museum. Thus it enjoys a glory which all table-covers of any pretensions to elegance would doubtless, could they speak, declare to be the summit of their hopes. And as you may any day go and see it for yourselves, I need not add another word to prove my story strictly true.

Pretty Anna Fuchsberg sat in her gloomy old parlour in the city of Strasburg, in the year 1680. The heavy fittings, leather and oak, made it gloomy even on this sunny day;—but it held one bit of brightness—little Anna, sitting at the window, in all her smart German costume, with ribboned bodice and plaited yellow hair. Her tapestry-work had fallen from her hand, and she sat steadfastly looking out, in spite of the August sun (hardly checked by the vine-leaves round the lattice), which threatened to freckle her dainty blonde skin. The town-clock was striking with a deep, booming thrill; the hour was that at which the morning service came to an end, and from the quarter where the fairy shaft of the cathedral spire darted up above the roofs into the summer blue, folks were already coming by twos and threes with their good little books in their hands. Some of the girls, as they went by chatting, saw Anna and nodded. She smiled back at them, yet, when they had passed, she did not cease to watch. She never left the window till M. Emile turned out of the little street leading from the cathedral to her father's house; and then she was as red as a rose. Other young girls gave him coquettish little smiles, but for all his fine French dress and manners, he did not stay to coquette with them, but came on like a true simple-hearted young lover, to the home of his chosen lady. When he entered, she was seated demurely busy, far away from the window.

"What, M. Emile!" said the little puss. "You honour us again so soon?"

"Could I stay away, mademoiselle?" asked poor Emile, blushing as only a frank, good lad can blush.

Anna sat down to her work again.

"I would not hinder your embroidery, mademoiselle," said Emile, humbly. "It is very beautiful."

"It is for my father's fête, as you call it. You know that he and I were born on the same day of the year."

"It was concerning your fête that I wished to speak, mademoiselle, and therefore I ventured to come again so soon; I thought—I hoped, that you would not be too proud to honour by your presence a modest feast, to which I desire to bid you and your honoured father on that day. Poor as the offering is, will you accept it in token of an esteem worthy even of you?"

Little Anna, in her joy, could no longer be prudish.

"Oh, M. Emile, how good you are! It will be delicious!"

"It will be happiness to me, mademoiselle. You know already that each moment passed near you——"

The door opened suddenly, and the worthy burgher, Fuchsberg, was no ruddier himself than those two as they sprang up on his entrance. After one quick glance, he greeted Emile kindly, yet contrived to shorten the visit, so that there was no time again to proffer the invitation. But when the door had closed behind the youth, her father heard of it from Anna's lips.

"You will take me, father dear?" she pleaded, in the coaxing tone of a pet child.

Her father looked somewhat grave.

"We will think of this later, daughter." He paced the room twice, then returned to his downcast little maiden.

"My child," he began, placing himself beside her, "there is a thing which I meant to say to you when your sixteenth birthday should be passed. Hitherto you have been a child. Now, methinks it were wise to speak at once. Our good Emile is a worthy youth, yet I were loth to see him nearer to us than a *friend* may be."

The sudden red on Anna's cheek gave her father new anxiety.

"Why so, father?" she faltered.

"I will tell you why. Heaven forbid I should wilfully sacrifice the happiness of my child; yet, if honour and justice have any value, they are worth a sacrifice even of those dearest to us."

Burgher Fuchsberg had certain signs which marked him out from his class. His eyes were deep, and clear, and thoughtful, and now looked out into the street, with its queer brown gables, seeing not those, but something deeper in his mind.

He turned again to Anna.

"You know (though I do not boast) that ours is not a burgher family. Now, to tell you what is on my mind, I must recal to you your name. Frau Anna, once Anna Blinkin, who married my grandfather, Henry von Geispitzheim—you have heard tell of her?"

"Oh, yes!" Still a child, Anna cleared her brow at the prospect of a story. "She was a marvellous needlewoman. We have the pillow and the wonderful bag worked by her. I try to copy the stitches, but I always fail."

"She was a woman of note in other ways ; a good woman, but with strong feelings, keen lovings and hatings, distinguishing even her own children from one another. She was proud, too ; very evilly proud. I say it, though she was my ancestress.

"She had many children, but some dying, was left with two daughters and a son. Her husband was also dead, and she was now growing into years. Her youngest daughter married and went far away, and there remained, besides her Richard, only the second-born, my mother, the honoured Magdalene Elizabeth. Now she, my child, was fair and slim, and sweetly spoken. She was ever her mother's own daughter, and held with her in her maxim that wine and such heady liquors are not good for man. She was always a water-drinker, and, although I have not held to her custom, I honour her for a wise and temperate woman in that as in most things. Unhappily, I must own (though to none but thee), that Frau Anna kindled in my mother more of her own pride than is fitting in us poor human worms.

"Now Richard (who must have been a very pleasing youth, though little spoken of in our family) was somehow set aside from the mother-love which was his due, and he loved a burgher maiden, of whom I have heard that she was fair, and never that she was aught but virtuous.

"You will hold with me, daughter, that though it is of God's ordinance that class and class should keep apart, yet, that being of one flesh, noble and simple alike, there are times when too wide a separation becomes folly. So with us. Our old castle was beaten to the ground by winds and wars, and we were forced to live in the city, not like the wild free lords (often, alas ! noble but in name) who dwelt in their rocky dens and lived by plunder."

"Did uncle Richard marry the woman he loved ?" asked Anna.

"He did ; but only after bitter struggles and much unkindness, in which, sooth to say, my mother took greater part than was fitting. At last, after many years of patient waiting, Richard von Geispitzheim cast aside the hope of his mother's blessing, and wedded against her will. When he brought his bride, in hopes that her simple sweetness might win pardon for both, Frau Anna and, I fear me, her daughter, too, stood up in their proud ancestral beauty, and scorned the gentle maiden and their own son and brother. Ah ! it is a bitter thing when pride parts blood. Then Frau Anna, who had known of this coming, flung his portion in Richard's face, with an unmotherly scoff. And, he who was proud too in his way, and very tender-hearted (I heard it all and often from our old nurse, who kissed thee before she died) laid down the gold and papers with a solemn respect, and told her who was, but did not seem, his parent, that, leaving her, he should cleave henceforth to his wife alone, and that those proud women should see him no more. Moreover that, spurning their *noble* gear, he would embrace the station

of his wife, and starve or work with her. Then he led away his trembling burgher maid, and they never crossed that threshold again."

"How did they fare later, father?"

"I know little, for they did not stay in one spot. But this I know, that they had a son." He paused.

"But, father, you, the son of the proud Magdalene, how did *you* become a burgher?"

"My child, when I had reached man's estate, I often said: 'Why do I sit here idle, while all around are doing honest work?' It seemed to me that the old notions of nobility must needs be wrong, and that folly and cruelty must stain it more than labour. At last my father was persuaded to think with me and to desire good burgher gold to fill our coffers; and last of all, he made my mother yield. I fear it was hard for her; but if it made her the more earnest to call for her brother Richard, as she did on her death-bed (God rest her soul!), it was good. Then, where should I get money for my venture? for our purse had yearly less and less to fill it. My uncle's portion lay still in the chest where Frau Anna placed it when he gave it back; and now, after much talk, I used it for my first mercantile adventure. It was a wondrous success. I need say no more. You know that there are few wealthier than your father in this wealthy city."

"How gladly you would restore some of your gold to your Uncle Richard, father!"

The burgher's eyes glowed suddenly.

"That is the sting, child; it is my dream. I have had visions of his starvation; for the old nurse had heard rumours that he and his were enduring great poverty. Day and night have I pondered how to find them. In truth, I owe him all I have, for to his portion my success was due."

"Can you not seek for them?"

"I have tried, am trying. But my means of search are small. I have one clue—that they went to Paris. Yet now, when any day may bring Louis' troops upon us, there seems little hope of peaceful news from France."

"If you were to find Richard von Geispitzheim, should you give up *all* to him?" asked Anna, glancing at her solid luxuries, as if expecting to see them vanish before her eyes.

"In one sense, my darling; can you guess what I mean?"

She shook her head.

"Heaven keep me from spoiling thy joy," he said, bending back her head so that he looked full into her eyes. "The need may never come. Yet I would fain wait awhile, that if, perchance, we find our kin, and the youth is good and honest, I may pay my debt as alone I can—with my one little daughter!"

Anna's cheeks grew red—then deadly white.

She staggered as she rose, and throwing her arms about him, faltered in her father's ear :

"Oh ! father, I cannot marry ; I am too young. I can never, never leave you."

A smile and a tear were in Fuchsberg's eyes.

"Well, well, child, the trial may never come. But will you wait a little? I have too often dreamt of this restitution. Times and again, when you have asked : 'What are you thinking of so deeply, father dear?' and I would not tell, it was of this, my child."

"I will wait, father," said Anna, solemnly.

But the trial came soon enough. The morrow had not passed when young Emile stood before Fuchsberg, humbly yet boldly, praying for leave to win his daughter's love.

"You have not spoken to her?" asked Fuchsberg, sternly.

"On my honour, no ! Yet I trust, I hope—oh, sir ! we love one another ; I am sure of it. You will not deny her to me?"

Fuchsberg's eyes clouded with his deepest thought. "She is over young ;—she must wait." Then, with more decision :—"There is but one man she must wed : not thee, though thou art a brave lad, and I thank thee," he concluded, holding out his hand with a nobleman's best courtesy. The youth took it with tears in his eyes, which were none the less manly for that. He urged his suit more warmly.

"And, sir, you know that I, being in Gunzer's favour, may have power with the French king to serve my German friends, should he enter the city, as we daily expect."

"I know it," answered Fuchsberg, distressedly. "In truth, I had thought of this, for your looks towards Anna were not to be mistaken, young friend. But honour stands above safety, and this is a family matter, which cannot be set aside."

"And is there no hope, dear sir, in time,—in many years?"

"Let us wait awhile and see, Emile," answered Fuchsberg, gently "All things are in God's hand. Meanwhile, be these words as it were unspoken, and never, as you would keep for her her father's blessing, speak such to Anna save with my leave and knowledge.

"I promise," said the youth, and turned away to the deep-embursed window to recover fortitude. Fuchsberg was as sad as he.

Emile approached again.

"Will you grant one small favour, sir?"

"Willingly, dear lad."

"I had Mademoiselle Anna's promise to honour a little feast with which I hoped to commemorate your birthday and hers. I had so looked forward to that day. Will you still accept my poor offering?"

Fuchsberg clasped his hand affectionately.

"We will come, Emile, as you desire."

* * * * *

The feast-day came. Anna had perhaps guessed what had happened,

for she was pale, yet lovelier than ever, as she ascended by her father's side to Emile's room. The young host stood ready to receive them, and, as he led them in, Anna felt that the atmosphere of elegance in those dear precincts was to her the very air she would always wish to breathe, and her own German home grew at once distasteful.

Emile, though not rich, had hopes of rising. Bred in Paris, he had there won notice from Louis the Magnificent, who now had turned greedy eyes on the fine commercial German towns.

There was underhand work a-doing; golden keys, forged in France, were opening many magisterial doors in Strasburg, and, on the whole, the desire of the wealthy and somewhat unpatriotic borderers was rather that all were settled without loss, than that Strasburg should remain an Imperial city. And Emile, holding some small diplomatic mission under the favourite Gunzer, who had private interviews even with the bishop himself, hoped to gain notice of a more lucrative nature when Louis should enter in triumph.

His room, therefore, had a French grace which struck Anna with delight. A table covered with damask awaited its load of cheer. Drawings lay strewn upon a buffet, and a side-table artistically arranged with fruit and flowers and delicate wines, stood patiently until they should desire a dessert.

"You honour us too much!" said Fuchsberg, touched by the care of these preparations.

"That is not possible," answered Emile. "I could not, for pure selfishness, invite others to share your company; but I have at least provided some tapestry-work to puzzle mademoiselle's nimble fingers," he added gaily, pointing out a faded but marvellously broided cover on the side-table.

"How wonderful! whose work is this? I know but one piece equal to it."

"It was the work of an ancestress of mine," answered Emile. "My poor mother bade me keep it. I have thought little of it until now, when, for its quaintness, I fancied it might amuse you. Henceforward, it will be a treasure!"

The wicked Emile! It was too tempting to speak a word while the father was busied with the drawings; but Anna's sudden flush convicted him, and he blessed the servant, now entering with smoking dishes, for preventing his farther breach of trust.

The silver and damask and choice birthday meats were set aside, and the three placed at their dessert in the projecting upper window. The calm outlines of the Vosges made a distant resting-place for the eye, and before them rose the delicate shaft of the cathedral. There had been clouds, but these were clearing off in feathery streaks, leaving a pool of perfect blue behind the spire. A few poplars lifted their heads beneath the window. The flowers on the table sent out a dreamy per-

sume. The hour was all a dream. It lived long in the memory of those three.

"Now for this quaint handiwork!" cried Anna. "Look, father! a stag, a tree, ah! like a Nuremburg toy! and this uncomely creature, what is he? The colours are faded; is the cloth very old, M. Emile?"

"My mother once showed me the date embroidered here. Here, perhaps, or here; no!"

"Why, these are words. The tapestry is a book as well as a picture-gallery. See, father, these letters! gold on purple. How fine! Why, it is poetry. Oh, let us read it!"

The two young heads bent side by side over the antique characters. It was a happy hour for them, even its sadness being sweet. The father's melancholy had no sweet to temper it. He watched them very mournfully, wondering whether this parting were a sin in him.

Anna's clear voice, aided sometimes by Emile's mellow tones, spelt out the German doggerel, which may be thus translated:—

"Lo, children! these, my broidered rhymes,
Will tell you all in after times
What in your memory you should bear,
And teach you with a mother's care.
With righteous deed adorn your name;
Give each his due and get good fame.
Dear sons, avoid the heady wine:
Be ever pure, sweet daughters mine.
And know, when deed outrunneth thought,
The direst ill is oft-times wrought.
The love of God gives wisdom true,
And all the land is blest therethrough."

And so on, and so on.

"I am rather tired of this little sermon," said Anna. "Where are the date and name? Not here, nor here. Is it where you are looking, Herr Fuchsberg?"

"No, no, you have pored over this long enough. Show Anna your pictures, Emile."

The old man's voice faltered, but they did not heed, as they stood side by side holding the same drawing. "Why was he examining that old tapestry so studiously?" Emile thought (and blessed him inwardly) that he was generously granting them one last glad hour. But the old rhymes held a strange, keen interest for Fuchsberg. You, kind reader, may look in the middle of the table-cover, and see the words he was reading:—

"*Als man salt fünfzehn hundert jahr,
Dazn noch achtzig und fünf zwaz.
In fifteen hundred eighty-five,
Henry of Geispitzheim would wive:
I, Anna Blinkin (honoured dame),
Of Lichtenberg, must bear his name;
We both were noble, true, and dear,
And kept good house with ample cheer.*"

Here followed many lines in praise of Frau Anna's economy, wifely and motherly virtue, ending with a little prayer—

"That when our perfect lives must cease,
Our God may give us endless peace. Amen."

And a note :

"Henry, the husband, made this poetry."

Fuchsberg, his kind old face glowing with excitement, sought tremblingly elsewhere for information, which he found at last in the upper left-hand corner :—

"Now follows here the time aright
When I and mine first saw the light ;
In fifteen hundred fifty two,
My earliest cry made great ado.
In eighty-five was born my fine
And sweet Emilia Catherine.
Two years, and God did now inpart
That daughter dearest to my heart,
My Magdalena Lisbeth dear,
Who drinketh naught but water clear.
A boy, my Richard, next I bore ;
Oh ! praise the Lord for evermore !"

Fuchsberg could go no farther. He stood up tottering ; the young ones hurried to his side.

"Emile is not your name ! Tell me your true name !" he gasped.

Emile coloured.

"I was indeed baptized Emile, after a dear aunt who died early, and who loved my father."

"And your father !—who was he ?"

"Since you desire to know, sir (though I cannot see why this should so move you), my father's name was Richard—Richard von Geispitzheim. He was noble, but he married a burgher maid, and, in their pride, his family cast him off. So in *his* pride——"

"I know, I know !" cried Fuchsberg, flinging his arms about the young man's neck, while Anna shrank back with a trembling cry, feeling that such sudden joy was half a pain. "Tell me, is your father yet alive ?"

"Both father and mother are dead. I was the child of their old age. My brothers are dead also, but I have sisters living. This interests you deeply, sir ; I pray you, tell me why."

Trembling and with tears, the old man took his daughter's hand.

"Do you still desire this treasure of mine, Emile von Geispitzheim ?"

"Beyond all other treasure in the world !" cried the lad, radiant, and expectant of he knew not what.

"God has given her to you," said the father, solemnly. "You are he whom I sought." Even in that moment of intense bewilderment, the beautiful evening sun had never smiled on a more joyous scene.

And so Frau Anna's handiwork deserved the place of honour which it has won, three hundred years after its creation, in this our foreign land.

CERVANTES.

THE great Spaniard whose name stands at the head of this paper is one of those celebrated men around whose lives (partly from the little told of them by their contemporaries, partly from the web which the busy hand of tradition has for centuries been weaving about their forms) there hangs a certain degree of cloudy uncertainty. We will, however, by the aid of the scanty light we possess, do our best to render his figure distinct and vivid to the eyes of our readers.

Madrid, Seville, Esquivias, and Lucena, all lay claim to having been the birthplace of Miguel De Cervantes Saavedra; but it is doubtful whether any of them really were so. Around his parentage there also hangs a mystery which has never been cleared up, and which he himself, considering the silence maintained by him upon this subject throughout his writings, was probably not desirous to remove. Did this silence arise from the fact that the fair fame of some noble lady to whom he owed filial respect would have been injured by his speaking? Did his haughty yet tender mother glide at dusk through back streets, enveloped in her mantilla, to her boy's cradle? Did she sit with anguish in her heart, but smiles upon her lips, at some court pageant, while her son was fighting in a distant land? Or was it that Cervantes was born in a cottage, where a fresh lettuce to give a relish to his lump of black bread had been his first childish idea of enjoyment; and that pride made him dislike to own his lowly origin? This latter cause seems to us unworthy in truth of Cervantes, and unlike the rest of his character; but the greatest men are often not free from such weaknesses. Be this as it may, it is certain that Cervantes, either through his parents or some wealthy patron, received a liberal education, which embraced both classical and general knowledge. We may guess something of the influences which surrounded his early years. The Moors were, it is true, expelled from Spain, but their rich figurative poetry still whispered in the breezes that sighed through the orange groves of Seville; their strains of ballad music still lingered in the warbling fountains of the Alhambra; their strange, stern faith, that was built up at once by the dreams of fanatics and the power of military despots, was still represented on Spanish soil by the solid masonry and shadowy, crowding colonnades of the cathedral at Cordova. Snatches of verse that told of the gorgeous state of some Moorish potentate, must have run through the infant Cervantes' nursery; and tales of capricious Eastern princesses who changed their lovers into birds and beasts, must have riveted his

childish attention. Then there were the accounts brought home to Spain of that wonderful new world so lately discovered; accounts which, in their vague but marvellous details, concerning gigantic female warriors, and forests where each leaf was as large as an ordinary tree, and mines filled with diamonds, were so calculated to inflame a boyish imagination. The chivalrous spirit of the Spain of Isabella the Catholic, the martial spirit of the Spain of Charles the Fifth, were also still alive in the country; and it was probably these two spirits working together that sent the youth, when little over twenty, to seek adventure in a foreign land. He went to Rome, where he took service under Colonna, the general of the troops of Pope Pius the Fifth. What rank he held in the papal army is uncertain; but it is not likely that it was a very high one. It is only known that he was distinguished for his bravery, and that he was present at the naval battle of Lepanto, the most complete and splendid of the victories gained by the Cross over the Crescent. We can only pause to catch a brief glimpse of that glorious day in Cervantes' life; of the Mediterranean spreading out its heaving plain that shimmers in the sun-light with every varied tint of blue; of the fable-haunted shores of Greece, looming in soft perspective in the distance; of the superb Turkish Armada, rich in brilliant colouring, with purple sails and 'broidered pennants, and showy turbans, and jewelled belts, and glistening plumes; of Don John, the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Squadron, standing on his galley's poop, shining in his manly beauty like a hero of Homeric story; of the shock of galley against galley; of the clash of Christian swords and Infidel scimitars; of the red blood streaking the white crested waves; of the cannon smoke, obscuring with its thick sulphurous vapour the bright clear air; of the victorious battle-cry of the Christian, and the muttered curse of the Moslem. But we must not dwell longer upon any of these things, since our chief concern with the battle of Lepanto is that Cervantes lost in it his hand, which mutilation disabled him from serving any more as a soldier. He returned to Rome, where he entered the household of the Cardinal di Acquaviva, who was one of those merry, open-handed, easy-going prince-prelates, frequently to be met with in the Italy of that day. He was just the sort of man to make a pleasant patron. Cervantes soon found that his place in the Cardinal's suite, while it brought him in a liberal salary, was a mere sinecure, and so he set himself in earnest to literary composition, which had hitherto doubtless been his favourite pastime, though the desire for military glory had allowed it but a second place in his heart. The ambition of the soldier was, however, now soon superseded by the ambition of the author; and he wrote very rapidly seven or eight plays, which were acted with success in Madrid. At the time of Cervantes' birth, the Spanish stage had been in a very rude and primitive condition; a little platform, raised slightly from the ground, and hung round

with two or three blankets, and a sheep-skin bag containing a few bits of tawdry finery, being its simple accessories. Lope de Rueda, however, an energetic play-writer and actor, who was flourishing in Cervantes' boyhood, had done a good deal towards raising and refining the theatre, but Rueda had only drawn the outline of the Spanish drama; and Cervantes was the first to put into it the warm colouring of life, a work which was perfected by Lopez de Vega and Calderon.

It is probable Cervantes often passed from Italy to Spain on literary business. In one of these transits he was taken prisoner by the Moors, and carried to Barbary, where he remained for five years. The most remarkable feature in his long captivity was the singular favour he enjoyed with the Basha Hassan Aga, who was one of the most cruel and despotic sovereigns that ever sat upon a Moslem throne. Cervantes was incessantly setting at nought the authority of the Basha. Sometimes he scaled the walls of the monarch's seraglio; sometimes he defended a captive whom he saw badly used; sometimes he formed plots to escape. Once he actually made an agreement with the captain of a Majorca vessel to come and carry off himself and several other Christian prisoners. The scheme failed, but Cervantes and his companions contrived, by hiding in caves, to elude for six months the soldiers sent in search of them by the Basha; yet, notwithstanding all his wild pranks, and all his more sturdy acts of rebellion, Hassan never treated Cervantes with anything but friendly favour; thus proving that there must have been about the handsome, witty young Spaniard, a strange, powerful fascination, that could enthrall and keep subjected to him even this hardened old tyrant. At length Cervantes was ransomed and returned to Spain. And now for some twenty years he led in Madrid (to use an expressive but somewhat slang term of the present day) a very fast life. He kept open house, and at his table (around which sparkled the most brilliant wits of the day) were to be tasted nothing but the most expensive dishes, and the finest flavoured wines. He rode the most fiery and proud-stepping Andalusian horses that were brought up to the metropolis. He walked incessantly in the sun-light of bright Castilian eyes. His chestnut hair, which was of the same hue as the curls that crowned the brows of Shakespeare and Raphael; his face, with its small, mobile Southern features, and his broad-shouldered, athletic form; were to be seen in the midst of the maddest whirl of dissipation in the capital. No doubt his conduct all this time was very wild and reckless, and often exceedingly reprehensible; yet, in the midst of all his extravagancies, he found time to do two good pieces of work; namely, to marry his faithful Catalina, and to write his novel of *Galatea*; and his purse was always ready to open itself at the call of poverty, more especially of distressed authors. Men of genius may and do often commit errors of judgment or imagination; but it is seldom that their hearts do not beat true to what is tender and noble. The result of this course

of life was, that at the age of fifty, Cervantes found himself hopelessly involved in debt. His rich and distinguished friends, who used to be so ready to sip his luscious Malaga, and give their opinion of its merits, now avoided his house, just as if there were in its neighbourhood some subtle spell that would turn them to stone. Cervantes had no means of satisfying his creditors, and so he went to prison. Probably many of our readers will exclaim that it served him right; but still we think that if they could have seen the sweet, half-playful, half-resigned smile that shone upon his lips as he passed through the streets on the way to his place of captivity, they would have been sorry for him; as, we must confess, we are. Cervantes now had full time to reflect on and repent of his past follies; and no doubt he did repent, in his strong, honest, manly way. Very soon, too, he is sitting in the golden fountain that the sun poured through his narrow window, laughing with a more genuine heartiness than he ever laughed with in his prosperity. As he sits thus enjoying himself, a simply dressed, pale lady glides into his cell. Her youth is past, but there is still the autumn of beauty in her face. Her mouth is at once firm and tender, and in her eyes there is a gentle gravity. He is so absorbed in his jest, that he does not at first observe her, and she stands looking at him with much surprise and some little severity in her countenance, for she evidently thinks that it would more befit a prisoner to be praying than laughing. Soon he notices her, and springing up, clasps her in his arms. When she is beginning a womanly lecture upon the unbecomingness of a captive indulging in too light a frame of mind, he stops his Catalina by asking her if she has brought the paper and pen and ink with her. Then the author's wife begins to comprehend what is in the wind, and to ask no more questions, and talks of common-place things. Another time when Catalina comes, she finds him standing in the silver shower which the moonbeams are now sending into the cell, with a softened look in his eyes, as though he had been weeping. But still the author's well-trained helpmate says nothing, for she knows that his own sorrows have not caused his tears. At length, one day, he bids her sit down and listen. Then does Catalina herself laugh and weep as the form of Sancho is unveiled before her, and the woes of poor Dorothea steal upon her ear. Very soon did the immortal knight and esquire issue forth from that dingy prison-gate, to ride on through distant lands and distant centuries, scattering round them a perennial stream of laughter and tears.

The Duke de Bejar, one of the king's ministers, at length procured Cervantes' release. But though a member of the government did him this one great service, and though Philip the Third and his courtiers were constantly talking about their pride in their man of genius, and promising him assistance, he in reality never received from them any substantial benefit. Indeed, when we consider the wide difference between the Court and the author, we cannot wonder that no true cordiality could

exist between them. There was the Court, with its pompous, avaricious monarch, its ponderous machinery of etiquette, its circumscribed, dilatory policy; its exclusive, bigoted nobility; its outside gilding, its interior rottenness. There was the author, with his bold freedom of thought, his delicate satire, his genial generosity, his chivalrous tenderness, and his manly honesty. Sooner might fire and water mingle than these. The Count De Lemos, a distinguished noble of that day, did, however, patronize and protect Cervantes in a haughty, scanty, tardy sort of way; but the pecuniary help he gave him was, it appears, very small; and it shows the extreme indigence Cervantes must have been in, and the wonderful sweetness and gratitude of his nature, that he should have expressed himself as warmly as he does towards the Count in the dedication to one of his books. In truth, the poverty in which Cervantes spent the last fifteen years of his life (and that at the time when his great work was spreading throughout Europe) is a real blot on the Spanish nation. It was in this failure of his genius to bring him any of the substantial rewards of the world, and this unreadiness of the wealthy and powerful in his country to provide him even with a decent subsistence, that there was a certain similarity between the careers of Cervantes and Tasso, of whom we wrote in a former paper. Both were celebrated throughout the length and breadth of the land, and yet both lived in obscure poverty; both felt themselves possessed of power, and yet found that that power could gain for them neither station nor riches. Both had many admirers, but no friends. The difference, however, between the two men was, that while Tasso's temper was soured and his reason unhinged, Cervantes' sweet gentle disposition and clear understanding remained always the same. We can fancy him, a shabbily-dressed old man, his chestnut hair thickly sprinkled with grey, and his strong form bent, sitting in his poorly furnished room, working away at his plays, for which he could get only a scanty remuneration—for Lopez De Vega was now all the rage in the Spanish theatres; yet still with a genial smile upon his lips, with a merry word for his Catalina, with a heart ready to share the half loaf in the cupboard hard by with the first hungry wanderer that should come to the door. Besides his plays he wrote in these last fifteen years the second part of "*Don Quixote*," and the "*Novelas Exemplares*." These latter are a collection of short tales that display the most marvellous fertility of fancy. Some people object to them on the ground of immorality; but, though they are tinged with the coarseness of expression of the time, we cannot see that (if read in a right spirit) they ever sin against virtue.

A little while before his death, Cervantes received an affecting proof that though the king and his grandees would not part with even a small portion of their often ill-gained wealth to ensure to him an easy old age, his poorer countrymen loved and honoured him. He was riding one day near Madrid, when he met a poor student mounted on an ass. On be-

holding Cervantes, the youth sprang to the ground, and running up to him, seized his stirrup and covered it with kisses of passionate homage. Deeply touched, the great old man bent down and pressed the enthusiastic boy to his heart. Soon after that he died; therefore let us take our last view of him thus stooping down to embrace the lowly and simple; since this is the attitude in which the intellectual and good, those only true nobles of the earth, would best like their picture to go down to posterity.

ALICE KING.



"I KNOW NOT WHICH IS SWEETER, NO, NOT I."

THE sun is setting : from this height
I gaze into the West, which glows
With gold and crimson, flicked with light
Cloudlets of rose.

How soon they change ! each gorgeous hue
Grows less intense: some magic sway
Hath stolen the depth from yonder blue,
And left it gray.

The sky no more with crimson burns ;
The gold melts into silver sheen ;
Each rosy cloudlet purple turns :
Yon amber, green.

The sun has set. How drear and chill,
Robbed of his light our sad earth grows !
So mourned I when above the hill
The moon uprose.

So loveable, so calmly fair,
Of beauty all divine possessed ;
No crimson, golden hues are there,
But perfect rest.

Her heavenly light my gloom relieves ;
The rippling brook to pearl it turns ;
It twinkles on the laurel leaves
And silvery ferns.

Her queenly splendour glorifies
The azure sky from which she gleams ;
As lilies white that fall and rise
On deep blue streams.

So first love, wild and passionate,
That blindly its heart's treasure gives,
Yields to love, deep and temperate,
That longer lives.

W. B. THOMSON.

GOING THROUGH THE TUNNEL.

WE had to make a rush for it. And making a rush did not suit the Squire, any more than it does other people who have come to an age when the body's big and the breath nowhere. He reached the train, pushed head-foremost into a carriage, and then remembered the tickets. "Bless my heart!" he exclaimed, as he jumped out again, and nearly upset a lady with a little dog in her arms, and a great, big mass of fashionable hair, that the Squire mistook for tow.

"Plenty of time, sir," said a guard who was passing. "There's three minutes yet!"

Instead of saying he was obliged to the man for his civility, or relieved to find the tickets might be had still, the Squire snatched out his old watch, and began abusing the railway clocks for being slow. Had Tod been there he would have told him to his face that it was the watch that was fast, braving all retort, for the Squire believed in his watch as he did in himself, and would rather have been told that *he* could go wrong than that the watch could. But there was only me: and I'd not have said it for anything.

"Keep two back-seats there, Johnny," said the Squire.

I put my coat on the corner-seat furthest from the door, and the rug on the one next to it, and followed him into the station. When the Squire was late in starting, he was apt to get into the greatest flurry conceivable; and the first thing I saw was himself blocking up the ticket-place, and undoing his pocket-book with twitching fingers. He had some loose gold about him, silver too, but the pocket-book met his hand first, so he pulled out that. These flurried moments of the Squire's amused Tod beyond telling; he was so cool himself.

"Can you change this?" said the Squire, drawing out one from a roll of five-pound notes.

"No, I can't," was the answer, in the surly tone put on by ticket-clerks.

How the Squire crumpled up the note again, and searched in his breeches-pocket for the gold, and came away with the two tickets and the change, I'm sure he never knew. There was a crowd gathered round, wanting to take their tickets in turn, and the knowledge that he was keeping them flurried him all the more. He stood at the back a moment, put the roll of notes into his case, fastened it and returned it to the breast of his over-coat, sent the change down into another pocket without counting it, and went out with the tickets

in his hand. Not to the carriage ; but to take a stare at the big clock in front.

"Do you see, Johnny? exactly four minutes and a half difference," he cried, holding out his watch to me. "It is a strange thing they can't keep these railway clocks in order."

"My watch keeps good time, sir, and mine is with the railway. I think it is right."

"Hold your tongue, Johnny. How dare you! Right! You send your watch to be regulated the first opportunity, sir; don't *you* get into the habit of being too late or too early."

When we went finally to the carriage there were some people in it, but our seats were left. Squire Todhetley sat down by the further door, and settled himself and his coats and his things comfortably, which he had been too flurried to do before. Cool as a cucumber was he, now the bustle was over; cool as Tod could have been. At the other door, with his face to the engine, sat a dark, gentlemanly-looking man of forty, who had made room for us to pass him as we got in. He had a large signet-ring on one hand, and a lavender glove on the other. The other three seats opposite to us were vacant. Next to me sat a little man with a fresh colour and gold spectacles, who was already reading; and beyond him, in the corner, face to face with the dark man, was a lunatic. That's to speak of him politely. Of all the restless, fidgety, worrying, hot-tempered passengers that ever put themselves into a carriage to travel with people in their senses, he was the worst. In fifteen moments he had made fifteen darts; now after his hat-box and things above his head; now calling the guard and the porters to ask senseless questions about his luggage; now treading on our toes, and trying the corner-seat opposite the Squire, and then darting back to his own. His hair was a wig, and had a decided green tinge, the effect of keeping perhaps, and his skin was dry and shrivelled as an Egyptian mummy's.

A servant, in undress livery, came to the door, and touched his hat, which had a cockade in it, as he spoke to the dark man.

"Your ticket, my lord."

Lords are not travelled with every day, and some of us looked up. The gentleman took the ticket from the man's hand and slipped it into his waistcoat pocket.

"You can get me a newspaper, Wilkins. The *Times*, if it is to be had."

"Yes, my lord."

"There's room here, ma'am," interrupted the guard, unlocking the door and sending it back with a click. "Make haste, please."

The lady who stepped in was the same that the Squire had bolted against. She sat down in the seat opposite me, and looked at every one of us by turns. There was a kind of violet bloom on her face, and a soft white

powder, seen plain enough through her veil. She took the longest gaze at the dark gentleman, bending a little forward to do it; for, as he was in a line with her, and had his head turned from her as well, her curiosity could only get a view of his side-face. Mrs. Todhetley might have said she had not got her company manners on. In the midst of this, the servant-man came back again.

"The *Times* is not here yet, my lord. They are expecting the papers in by this next down-train."

"Never mind, then. You can get me one at the next station, Wilkins."

"Very well, my lord."

Wilkins must certainly have had a scramble for his carriage, for we started before he had well left the door. It was not an express-train, and we should have to stop at several stations. Where the Squire and I had been staying does not matter; there's no time for it, and it has nothing to do with what I have to tell. It was a long way from our own home, and that's enough to say.

"Would you mind changing seats with me, sir?"

I looked up to find the lady's face close to mine; she had spoken in a half whisper. The Squire, who carried his old-fashioned notions of politeness with him when he went travelling, at once got up to offer her the corner. But she declined it, saying she was subject to face-ache, and did not care to be next the window. So she took my seat, and I sat down in the one opposite Mr. Todhetley.

"Which of the peers is that?" I heard her ask him in a loud whisper, as the lord put his head out at his window.

"Don't know at all, ma'am," said the Squire. "Don't know many of the peers myself, except those of my own county: Lyttelton, and Beauchamp, and ——"

Of all snarling barks, the worst was given that moment in the Squire's face, stopping the list suddenly. The little dog, an ugly, hairy, vile-tempered Scotch terrier, had been held in concealment under the lady's jacket, and now struggled himself free. The Squire's look of consternation was good: you see, he had not known any animal was there.

"Be quiet, Wasp. How dare you bark at the gentleman? He'll not bite, sir: he ——"

"Who has got a dog in the carriage?" shrieked out the lunatic, starting up in a passion. "Dogs don't travel with passengers. Here! Guard! Guard!"

To call out for the guard when a train is going at full speed is generally useless. The lunatic had to sit down again; and the lady, so to say, defied him, coolly avowing that she had hid the dog from the guard on purpose, and staring him in the face while she said it.

After this there was a lull, and we went speeding along, the lady talking now and again to the Squire. She seemed to want to get confi-

dential with him; but the Squire didn't seem to see it, though he was quite civil. She held the dog in her lap amidst her clothes, so that nothing but his head peeped out.

"Halloa! How dare they be so negligent? There's no lamp in this carriage."

It was the lunatic again, and we all looked at the lamp. It had no light in it; but that it *had* when we first reached the carriage was certain; for as the Squire went stumbling in, his head nearly touched the lamp, and I had noticed the flame. It seems the Squire had also.

"They must have put it out while we were getting our tickets," he said.

"I'll know the reason why when we stop," cried the lunatic, fiercely.

"After passing the next station, we dash into the long tunnel. The idea of going through it in pitch-darkness! It would not be safe."

"Especially with the dog in the carriage," spoke the lord, in a chaffing kind of tone but with a good-natured smile. "We'll have the lamp lighted, however."

As if to reward him for interference, the dog barked up loudly, and tried to make a spring at him. Upon which the lady smothered the animal up, head and all.

Another minute or two, and the train began to slacken its speed. It was but an insignificant station, one not likely to be halted at for above a minute. The lunatic twisted his body out at the window, and shouted out for the guard long before we were at a standstill.

"Allow me to manage this," said the lord, quietly putting him down. "They know me on the line. Wilkins!"

The man came rushing up at the call: he must have been out already, though we were not quite standing yet.

"Is it for the *Times*, my lord? I'm going to get it?"

"Never mind the *Times*. This lamp is not lighted, Wilkins. See the guard, and *get it done*. At once."

"And ask him what the mischief he means by his carelessness," roared out the lunatic in the wake of Wilkins, who went flying off. "Sending us on our road without a light!— and that dangerous tunnel close at hand."

The emphatic authority laid upon the words "Get it done," seemed an earnest that the speaker was accustomed to be obeyed at will, and would be this time. For once the lunatic sat quiet, watching the lamp, and for the light that was to be dropped into it from the top; and so did I, and so did the lady. We were all deceived, however, and the train went puffing on. The lunatic shrieked, the lord put his head out of the carriage and shouted for Wilkins.

No good. Shouting after a train is off, never is much good. The lord sat down on his seat again, an angry frown crossing his face, and the lunatic got up and danced on his two legs.

"I do not know where the blame lies," observed the lord. "Not with my servant, I think : he is attentive, and has been with me some years."

"I'll know where it lies," retorted the lunatic. "I'm a director on the line, though I don't often travel on it. This *is* management, this is. A few minutes more, and we shall be in the dark tunnel."

"Of course it would have been satisfactory to have a light ; but it is not of so much consequence," said the nobleman, wishing to soothe him. "There's no danger in the dark."

"No danger ! No danger, sir ! I think there is danger. Who's to know that dog won't spring out and bite us ? Who's to know there won't be an accident in mid-tunnel ? A light is a protection against having our pockets picked, if it's a protection against nothing else."

"I fancy our pockets are pretty safe to-day," said the lord, glancing round at us with a good-natured smile ; as much as to say that none of us looked like thieves. "And I certainly trust we shall get through the tunnel in safety."

"And I will take care the dog does not bite you in the dark," spoke up the lady, pushing her head forward to give the lunatic a nod or two, that you'd hardly have matched for defiant impudence. "You'll be good, won't you, Wasp ! But I should like the lamp lighted myself ; you will perhaps be so kind, my lord, as to see that there's no mistake made about it at the next station !"

He slightly raised his hat to her and bowed in answer, but did not speak. The lunatic buttoned up his coat with fingers that were either nervous or angry, and then disturbed the little gentleman next him, who had read his big book through the whole commotion without once lifting his eyes, by hunting everywhere for his pocket-handkerchief.

"Here's the tunnel !" he cried out resentfully, as we dashed with a shriek into pitch-darkness.

It was all very well for her to say she would take care of the dog, but the first thing the young beast did was to make a spring at me and then at the Squire, barking and yelping frightfully. The Squire pushed it away in a commotion. Though well accustomed to dogs, he always fought shy of strange ones. The lady chattered and laughed, and did not seem to try to get hold of him, but we couldn't see, you know ; the Squire hissed at him, the dog snarled and growled ; altogether there was noise enough to deafen anything but a tunnel.

"Pitch him out at the window," cried the lunatic.

"Pitch yourself out," answered the lady. And whether she propelled the dog, or whether he went of his own accord, the beast sprang to the other end of the carriage, and was seized upon by the nobleman.

"I think, madam, you had better put him under your mantle and

keep him there," said he, bringing the dog back to her and speaking quite civilly, but in the same tone of authority he had used to his servant about the lamp. "I have not the slightest objection to dogs myself, but many people have, and it is not altogether pleasant to have them loose in a railway carriage. I beg your pardon; I cannot see; is this your hand?"

It was her hand, I suppose, for the dog was left with her, and he went back to his seat again. When we emerged out of the tunnel into the light of day, the lunatic's face was blue.

"Ma'am, if that miserable brute had laid hold of me by so much as the corner of my great-coat tail, I'd have had the law of you. It is perfectly monstrous that anybody, putting themselves into a first-class carriage, should attempt to outrage railway laws, and upset the comfort of travellers with impunity. I shall complain to the guard."

"He does not bite, sir; he never bites," she softly answered, as if sorry for the escapade, and wishing to conciliate him. "The poor little bijou is frightened at darkness, and leaped from my arms unawares. There! I'll promise that you shall neither see nor hear him again."

She had tucked the dog so completely out of sight, that no one could have suspected one was there, just as it had been on first entering. The train was drawing up to the next station; when it stopped, the servant came and opened the carriage-door for his master to get out.

"Did you understand me, Wilkins, when I told you to get this lamp lighted?"

"My lord, I'm very sorry; I understood your lordship perfectly, but I couldn't see the guard," answered Wilkins. "I caught sight of him running up to his van-door at the last moment, but the train began to move off, and I had to jump in myself, or else be left behind."

The guard passed as he was explaining this, and the nobleman drew his attention to the lamp, curtly ordering him to "light it instantly." Lifting his hat to us by way of farewell, he disappeared; and the lunatic began upon the guard as if he were commencing a lecture in Bedlam to a deaf audience. The guard seemed not to hear it, so lost was he in astonishment at there being no light.

"Why, what can have doubted it?" he cried aloud, staring up at the lamp. And the Squire smiled at the familiar word, so common in our ears at home, and had a great mind to ask the guard whence he came.

"I lighted all these here lamps myself afore we started, and I see 'em all burning," said he. There was no mistaking the home accent now, and the Squire looked down the carriage with a beaming face.

"You are from Worcestershire, my man."

"From Worcester itself, sir. Leastways from St. John's, which is the same thing."

"Whether you are from Worcester, or whether you are from Jericho,

I'll let you know that you can't put dark lamps into first-class carriages on this line without being made to answer for it," roared the lunatic. "What's your name? I am a director."

"My name is Thomas Brooks, sir," replied the man, respectfully touching his silver-banded cap. "But I declare to you, sir, that I've told the truth in saying the lamps were all right when we started: how this one can have got douted, I can't think. There's not a guard on the line, sir, more particular in seeing to his lamps than I am."

"Well, light it now; don't waste time excusing yourself," growled the lunatic. But he said nothing about the dog; which was surprising.

In a twinkling the lamp was lighted and we were off again. The lady and her dog were quiet now: he was out of sight; she leaned back to go to sleep. The Squire put his head against the curtain, and shut his eyes to do the same; the little man, as before, never looked off his book; and the lunatic frantically shifted himself every two minutes between his own seat and that of the opposite corner. There were no more tunnels and we went smoothly on to the next station. Five minutes allowed there.

The little man, putting his book in his pocket, took up a black leather bag from above his head, and got out; the lady, her dog hidden still, prepared to follow him, wishing the Squire and me, and even the lunatic with a forgiving smile, a polite good morning. I had moved to that end, and was watching the lady's wonderful back-hair as she stepped out, when all in a moment the Squire sprang up with a shout and a cry, and jumped out nearly upon her, calling out that he had been robbed. She dropped the dog, and I thought he must have caught the lunatic's disorder and become frantic.

It is of no use attempting to describe exactly what followed. The lady, snatching up her dog, shrieked out that perhaps she had been robbed too; she laid hold of the Squire's arm, and went with him into the station-master's room. And there we were: us three; and the guard, and the station-master, and the lunatic, who had come pouncing out too at the Squire's cry. The man in spectacles had disappeared for good.

The Squire's pocket-book was gone. He gave his name and address at once to the station-master: and the guard's face lighted with intelligence when he heard it, for he knew the Squire by reputation. The pocket-book had been safe just before we entered the tunnel; the Squire was certain of that, having felt it. He had sat in the carriage with his coat unbuttoned, rather thrown back; and nothing could have been easier than for a practised thief to draw it cleverly out, under cover of the darkness.

"I had fifty pounds in it," he said; "fifty pounds in five-pound notes. And some memoranda besides."

"Fifty pounds!" cried out the lady, quickly. "And you could travel

with all that about you, and not button up your coat! You ought to be rich!"

"Have you been in the habit of meeting thieves, madam, when travelling?" suddenly demanded the lunatic, turning upon her without warning, his coat whirling about on all sides with the rapidity of his movements, as if the wind took it.

"No, sir, I have not," she answered, in an indignant tone. "Have you?"

"I have not, madam. But then you see *I* see no risk in travelling with a coat unbuttoned, although it may have bank-notes in its pockets."

She made no reply: was too much occupied turning out her own pockets and purse, to ascertain that they had not been rifled. Re-assured on the point, she sat down on a low box against the wall, nursing her dog; which had begun his snarling barks again.

"It must have been taken from me in the darkness as we went through the tunnel," affirmed the Squire to the room in general and perhaps the station-master in particular. "I am a magistrate, and have some experience in these things. I sat completely off my guard, a ready prey to anybody, my hands stretched out before me, grappling with that dog, that seemed—why, goodness me! yes he *did*, now that I think of it—that seemed to be held about fifteen inches off my nose on purpose to attack me. That's when the thing must have been done. But now—which of them could it have been?"

He meant of the passengers. As he looked hard at us in rotation, especially at the guard and station-master, who had not been in the carriage, the lady gave a shrill shriek, and threw the dog into the middle of the room.

"I see it all," she said, faintly. "He has a habit of snatching at things with his mouth. He must have snatched the case out of your pocket, sir, and dropped it from the window. You'll find it in the tunnel."

"Who has?" asked the lunatic, while the Squire stared in wonder.

"My poor little Wasp. Ah, villain! beast! it is he that has done all this mischief."

"He might have taken the pocket-book," I said, thinking it time to speak, "but he could not have dropped it out, for I put the window up as we went into the tunnel."

It seemed a nonplus, and her face fell again. "There was the other window," she said in a minute. "He might have dropped it there. I heard his bark quite close to it."

"*I* pulled up that window, madam," said the lunatic. "If the dog did take it out of the pocket, it may be in the carriage now."

The guard rushed out to search it; the Squire followed, but the station-master remained where he was, and closed the door after them.

A thought came over me that he was staying to keep the two passengers in view.

No; the pocket-book could not be found in the carriage. As they came back, the Squire was asking the guard if he knew who the nobleman was who had got out at the last station with his servant. But the guard did not.

"He said they knew him on the line."

"Very likely, sir. I have not been on this line above a month or two."

"Well, this is an unpleasant affair," said the lunatic, impatiently, "and the question is—What's to be done? It appears pretty evident that your pocket-book was taken in the carriage, sir. Of the four passengers, I suppose the one who left us at the last station must be held exempt from suspicion, being a nobleman. Another one got out here, and has disappeared; the other two are present. I propose that we should both be searched."

"I'm sure I am quite willing," said the lady, and she got up at once.

I think the Squire was about to disclaim any wish so to act; but the lunatic was resolute, and the station-master agreed with him. There was no time to be lost, for the train was in a hurry to go, her minutes were up, and the lunatic was turned out. The lady went into another room with two women, called by the station-master, and *she* was turned out. Neither of them had the pocket-book.

"Here's my card, sir," said the lunatic, handing one to Mr. Todhetley. "You know my name, I dare say. If I can be of any future assistance to you in this matter, you may command me."

"Bless my heart!" cried the Squire, as he read the name on the card. "How could you allow yourself to be searched, sir?"

"Because, in a case such as this, I think it only right and fair that everybody who has the misfortune to be mixed up in it *should* be searched," replied the lunatic, as they went out together. "It is a satisfaction to both parties. Unless you offered to search me, you could not have offered to search that woman; and I suspected her."

"Suspected *her*!" cried the Squire, opening his eyes.

"If I didn't suspect, I doubted. Why on earth did she cause her dog to make all that row the moment we got into the tunnel? It must have been done then. I should not be startled out of my senses if I heard that that silent man by my side and hers was in league with her."

The Squire stood in a kind of maze, trying to recall what he could of the little man in spectacles, and see if things would fit into one another.

"Don't you like her look?" he suddenly asked.

"No, I *don't*," said the lunatic, turning himself about recklessly. "I have a prejudice against painted women: they put me in mind of Jezebel. Look at her hair. It's awful."

He went out in a storm, and took his seat in the carriage, not a moment before it puffed off.

"Is he a lunatic?" I whispered to the Squire.

"He a lunatic!" he roared. "You must be a lunatic for asking it, Johnny. Why that's—that's——"

Instead of saying more, he showed me the card, and the name nearly took my breath away. He was a well-known London man, of science, talent, and position, and of world-wide fame.

"Well, I thought him nothing better than an escaped maniac."

"Did you," said the Squire. "Perhaps he returned the compliment on you, sir. But now—Johnny, who has got my pocket-book?"

As if it was of any use asking me! As we turned back to the station-master's room, the lady came into it, evidently resenting the search, although she had seemed to acquiesce in it so readily.

"They were rude, those women. It is the first time I ever had the misfortune to travel with men who carry pocket-books to lose them, and I hope it will be the last," she pursued, in scornful passion, meant for the Squire. "One generally meets with *gentlemen* in a first-class carriage."

The emphasis came out with a sort of shriek, and it told on him. Now that she was proved innocent, he was as vexed as she for having listened to the advice of the scientific man—but I can't help calling him a lunatic still. The Squire's apologies might have disarmed a cross-grained hyæna; and she came round with a smile.

"If anybody *has* got the pocket-book," she said, as she stroked her dog's ears, "it must be that silent man with the gold spectacles. There was nobody else, sir, who could have reached you without getting up to do it. And I declare on my honour that when that commotion first arose through my poor little dog, I felt for a moment something like a man's arm stretched out across me. It could only have been his. I hope you have the numbers of the notes."

"But I've not," said the Squire.

The room was being invaded by this time. Two stray passengers, a friend of the station-master's, and the porter who took the tickets, had crept in. All thought the lady's opinion must be correct, and said the spectacled man had got clear off with the pocket-book. There was nobody else to pitch upon. A nobleman travelling with his servant would not be likely to commit a robbery; the lunatic was really the man his card represented him to be, for the station-master's friend had seen and recognized him; and the lady was proved innocent by practical search. Wasn't the Squire in a passion!

"That close reading of his was all a blind," he said, in sudden conviction. "He kept his face down that we should not know him in future. He never looked at one of us! he never said a word! I shall go and find him."

Away went the Squire, as fast as he could run, but came back in a moment to know which was the way out, and where it led to. There was quite a lot of us by this time. The fields lay beyond the outlet of the station at the back; and a boy affirmed that he had seen a little gentleman in spectacles, with a black bag in his hand, making off over the first stile.

"Now look you here, boy," said the Squire. "If you catch that same man, I'll give you five shillings."

Tod could not have flown faster than the boy did. He took the stile at a kind of leap; it was high and awkward; and the Squire tumbled over it after him. Some boys and men joined in the chase, and a cow, feeding in the field, trotted after us and brought up the rear.

Such a shout from the boy! It came from behind the opposite hedge of the long field. I was over the gate first; the Squire came next.

On the edge of the dry ditch sat the passenger, his legs hanging down, his neck imprisoned in the boy's resolute arms. I knew him at once. His hat and his gold spectacles had fallen off in the scuffle; the black bag was wide open, and had a tall bunch of something green sticking up from it; some tools lay on the ground.

"Oh, you wicked hypocrite!" spluttered the Squire, not in the least knowing what he said in his passion. "Are you not ashamed to have played upon me so vile a trick? How dare you go about to commit robberies!"

"I've not robbed you, at any rate," said the man, his voice shaking a little and his face pale, while the boy loosed the neck but pinioned the arms behind.

"Not robbed me!" cried the Squire. "Good heavens! Whom do you suppose you have robbed, if not me? Here, Johnny, lad, you are a witness. He says he has not robbed me."

"I did not know it was yours," said the man, meekly. "Loose me, boy; I'll not attempt to run away."

"Halloa! here! what's to do?" roared a big fellow, swinging himself over the gate. "Any tramp been trespassing?—anybody wanting to be took up? I'm the parish constable."

If he had said he was the parish engine, ready to let loose buckets of water on the offender, he could not have been more welcome. The Squire's face was rosy with satisfaction.

"Have you got your handcuffs with you, my man?"

"I've not got them, sir; but I fancy I'm big enough and strong enough to take *him* without 'em. Something to spare, too."

"There's nothing like handcuffs for safety," said the Squire, rather damped, for he believed in them as one of the country's institutions.

"Oh, you villain! Perhaps you can tie him with cords?"

The thief floundered out of the ditch and stood upon his feet. He did not look an ungentlemanly thief, now you came to see him and

hear him, and his face, though scared and white, might have been thought an honest one. He picked up his hat and glasses, and held them in his hand while he spoke, in a tone of earnest remonstrance.

"Surely, sir, you will not have me taken up for this slight offence! I did not know I was doing wrong, and I doubt if the law would condemn me; I thought it was public property."

"Public property!" danced the Squire, turning red at the words. "Of all the impudent, brazen-faced rascals that are cheating the gallows, you must be the worst. My bank-notes public property!"

"Your what, sir?"

"My bank-notes, you villain. How dare you repeat your insolent question!"

"But I don't know anything about your bank-notes, sir," said the man, meekly. "I do not know what you mean."

They stood facing each other, a sight for a picture: the Squire with his hands under his coat, dancing a little in rage, his face crimson; the other quite still, holding his hat and gold spectacles, and looking at him in wonder.

"You don't know what I mean! When you confessed with your last breath that you had robbed me of my pocket-book!"

"I confessed—I have not sought to conceal—that I have robbed the ground of this rare fern," said the man, handling carefully the green-stuff in the black bag. "I have not robbed you, or any one, of anything else."

The tone, simple, quiet, self-contained, put the Squire in a maze. He stood staring.

"Are you a fool?" he asked. "What do you suppose I have to do with your rubbishing ferns?"

"Nay, I supposed you owned them; that is, owned the land. You led me to believe so, in saying I had robbed you."

"What I've lost is a pocket-book, with ten five-pound bank-notes in it; I lost it in the train; it must have been taken as we came through the tunnel; and you sat next but one to me," reiterated the Squire.

The man put on his hat and glasses. "I am a geologist and botanist, sir. I came here after this plant to-day—having seen it yesterday, but I had not then my tools with me. I don't know anything about the pocket-book and bank-notes."

So that was another mistake, for the botanist turned out of his pockets a heap of letters directed to him, and the big book he had been reading in the train, a treatise on botany, to prove who he was. And, as if to leave no loop-hole of doubt, one stepped up who knew him, and assured the Squire there was not a more learned man in his line, no, nor one more respected, in the three kingdoms. The Squire shook him by the hand in apologizing, and told him we had some valuable ferns near Dyke Manor, if he would come and see them.

Like Patience on a monument, when we got back, sat the lady, waiting to see the prisoner brought in. Her face would have made a picture too, when she discovered the upshot, and saw the hot Squire and the gold spectacles walking side by side in friendly talk.

"I think still he must have got it," she said, sharply.

"No, madam," answered the Squire. "Whoever may have taken it, it was not he."

"Then there's only one man, and that is he whom you have let go on in the train," she decisively returned: "I thought his fidgety movements were not put on for nothing. He had secured the pocket-book somewhere, and then made a show of offering to be searched. Ah, ha!"

And the Squire veered round again at this suggestion, and began to suspect he had been doubly cheated. First out of his money, next out of his suspicions. One only thing in the whole bother seemed clear; and that was, that the notes and case had gone for good. As, in point of fact, they had.

We were on the chain-pier at Brighton, Tod and I. It was about eight or nine months after. I had got my arms on the high rails at the end, looking at a pleasure-party sailing by. Tod, next to me, was bewailing his ill-fortune in not possessing a yacht and opportunities of cruising in it.

"I tell you No. I don't want to be made sea-sick."

The words came from somebody behind us. It seemed almost as though they were spoken in reference to Tod's wish for a yacht to cruise in. But it was not *that* that made me turn sharp round; it was the sound of the voice, for I thought I recognized it.

Yes: there she was. The lady who had been with us in the carriage that day. The dog was not with her now, but her hair was more amazing than ever, with a horse's tail behind. She did not see me. As I turned, she turned, and began to walk slowly back, arm-in-arm with a gentleman. And to see him—that is, to see them together—made me open my eyes. For it was the lord who had travelled with us.

"Look, Tod!" I said, and told him in a word who they were.

"What the deuce do they know of each other?" cried Tod, with a frown for he felt angry every time the thing was referred to: not for the loss of the money, but for what he called the stupidity of us all; saying always had *he* been there, he should have detected the thief at once.

I sauntered after them: why I wanted to learn which of the lords he was, I can't tell, for lords are numerous enough, but I had had a curiosity upon the point ever since. They encountered some people and were standing to speak; three ladies, and a fellow in a black-glazed hat with a piece of green ribbon round it.

"I was trying to induce my wife to take a sail," the lord was saying,

"but she won't. She is not a very good sailor, unless the sea has its calmest behaviour on."

"Will you go to-morrow, Mrs. Mowbray?" asked the man in the glazed hat, who spoke and looked like a gentleman. "I will promise you perfect calmness; I am weather-wise, and can assure you this little wind will have gone down before night, leaving us without a breath of air."

"I will go: on condition that your assurance shall prove correct."

"All right. You of course will come, Mowbray?"

The lord nodded. "Very happy."

"When do you leave Brighton, Mr. Mowbray?" asked one of the ladies.

"I don't know exactly. Not for some days."

"A muff as usual, Johnny," whispered Tod. "That man is no lord; he is a Mr. Mowbray."

"But, Tod, he *is* the lord. It is the one that travelled with us; there's no mistake about that. Lords can't put off their titles as parsons can: do you suppose his servant would have called him 'my lord,' if he had not been one?"

"At least there is no mistake that these people are calling him Mr. Mowbray now."

It was equally true. My ears had been as quick as Tod's, and I don't deny I was puzzled. They turned to come up the pier again with the people, and the lady saw me standing there with Tod. Saw me looking at her, too, and I think she did not relish it, for she took a step backward like one startled, and then stared me full in the face, as if asking who I might be. I lifted my hat.

There was no response. In another moment she and her husband were walking quickly down the pier together, and the other party went on to the top quietly. A man in a tweed suit and brown hat drawn low on his eyes, was standing back with his arms folded, looking after the two with a queer smile upon his face. Tod marked it and spoke.

"Do you happen to know that gentleman?"

"Yes, I do," was the answer.

"Is he a peer?"

"On occasion."

"On occasion!" repeated Tod. "I have a reason for asking," he added; "do not think me impertinent."

"Been swindled out of anything?" asked the man, coolly.

"My father was, some months ago. He lost a pocket-book with fifty pounds in it in a railway carriage. Those people were both in it, but not then acquainted with each other."

"Oh, weren't they!" said the man.

"No, they were not," I put in, "for I was there. He was a lord then."

"Ah," said the man, "and had a servant in livery no doubt, who came up my-lording him without occasion every other minute. He is a member of the swell-mob; one of the cleverest of the *gentlemen* fraternity of them, and the one who acts as servant is another."

"And the lady?" I asked.

"She is a third. They have been working in concert for two or three years now; and will give us trouble yet before their career is stopped. But for being cautiously clever, we should have had them long ago. And so they did not know each other in the train! I dare say not!"

The man spoke with quiet authority. He was a detective officer come down from London to Brighton that morning; whether for a private sanatory trip, or on business, he did not say. I related to him what had passed in the train.

"Ay," said he, after listening. "They contrived to put the lamp out before starting. The lady took the pocket-book during the commotion she caused the dog to make, and the lord received it from her hand when he gave her back the dog. Cleverly done! He had it about him, young sir, when he got out at the next station. *She* waited to be searched, and to throw the scent off. Very ingenious: but they'll be a little too much so some fine day."

"Can't you take them up?" demanded Tod.

"No."

"I will accuse them of it," he haughtily said. "If I meet them again on this pier——"

"Which you won't do to-day," interrupted the man.

"I heard them say they were not going for some days."

"Ah, but they have seen you now. And I think—I'm not quite sure—that he saw me. They'll be off by the next train."

"Who are *they*?" asked Tod, pointing to the top of the pier.

"Unsuspicious people whose acquaintance they have casually made here. Yes, an hour or two will see Brighton quit of the pair."

And it was so. A train was starting within an hour, and Tod and I galloped to the station. There they were: in a first-class carriage, not apparently knowing each other, I verily believe, for he sat at one door and she at the other, passengers dividing them.

"Lambs between two wolves," remarked Tod. "I have a great mind to warn the people of the company they are in. Would it be actionable, Johnny?"

The train moved off as he was speaking. And may I never write another word, if I did not catch sight of the servant-man and his cockade in the carriage next behind them!

JOHNNY LUDLOW.

MY DREAM.

I AM getting old now, and my home is in London, far away from the scenes and the people among which my young days were passed. Sometimes, when I look at the long row of houses, one exactly like another, on the opposite side of the street, and think of the sameness of my present life—the days going on, going on, with little to distinguish Monday from Tuesday—I wonder whether I really am the individual who stood in that hall and rode over those breezy commons, and marked her days by her pleasures. Things then come to me now as if I were watching the slides of a magic lanthorn. And brightest of all those slides are the events of five years—strangely unconnected with all that went before them; broken off—how suddenly, how sadly—from all that followed. On this winter evening I will record them.

My father was a country gentleman, not the richest, but the longest of descent in our county. His pedigree began with the heptarchy; in after centuries, when Saxon and Norman were forgetting their differences and blending into the great English nation, the heiress and representative of the Carews married the young Norman, Edmond Purefoy, and we, the Purefoys of Carew, kept, in the names of our family and of our hall and parish, the memory of our double ancestry. We were not exactly proud of our family—that was not the word for it; but we knew well that we were the oldest house in the county; our position was so perfectly known and assured that we never gave a thought to the matter. It came to us as the colour of our hair. And we never troubled our heads about keeping “great company;” we felt ourselves at home among the aristocracy, and the Purefoys of Carew were still the Purefoys of Carew though they had associated with beggars or chimney-sweeps.

Ours had ever been a hospitable house, and this virtue of hospitality my father inherited in full measure. Not a stranger came into the neighbourhood but tasted of our cheer. This did not fill my father’s purse, but it brought us a far more varied circle of acquaintance than usually is found in a country house. Some, I must confess, were utterly dull, some were of a different stamp, for of every one with whom my father had been acquainted, he kept a hold; and from the politician whom he had known at Cambridge to the rising artist who was the son of our upholsterer, all came to Carew, and all were welcome.

In the neighbourhood itself were few changes. Our county neighbours lived where their fathers had lived before them, and we exchanged

the same civilities with them as our grandfathers and grandmothers had done.

But a change was to come—a phenomenon was to appear: and he came in this fashion. Most of the land in the parish of Carew belonged to my father, but there was one estate which from time immemorial had been in the hands of a family, as long of descent among yeomen as we were among the landed gentry. From the fact of their living on their own estate, while all the others were my father's tenants, the Haddons of the Oak Farm had always held a position of their own with the farmers of the parish. The direct line ended with an old man and his wife, who were childless. Mrs. Haddon had died in the spring, her husband in the July following; and then a cousin from a distant county came with his mother to take possession of the Oak Farm.

I have never seen any other farm like that; I never shall see one. It was an old, quaint house, whose gables stood on a smooth square of turf. Up on a bank to the right was the orchard; and this orchard was the pride of the Haddons. The trees were set in regular rows; the grass in the green alleys between was regularly mown and kept; and whether in spring you looked down the lovely vistas of white and pink blossom, or in the autumn wandered among the laden boughs you felt that for once you had seen an idyll. In front of the house a road led up to the farm yard, and on the other side of this road were the garden-borders of old-fashioned flowers, beds of vegetables, espaliers, standard fruit trees, rows of strawberries; altogether a delicious confusion. It seemed as though every tree and plant had taken the corner best suited to it, for there surely never was a garden so productive—there never were such stocks, such wall-flowers, such violets, such roses, such strawberries as it contained.

“All things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace,”

I used to think, as I looked at the quaint silhouette of the gables on the turf, and heard the cawing of the rooks and the sounds from the distant farm-yard, and then passed in under the shadow of the deep porch to the cool, sweet atmosphere of the house. I was a pet of Mrs. Haddon's; she would talk by the hour to me of things I liked to hear about; and when I went with my father and mother to welcome the new-comers, it was with a half-jealous feeling at any one coming to fill her place.

But the new-comers were people of a different stamp. The first thing which struck my eye as we walked through the hall into the old-fashioned parlour, was a clean, newly-folded “Times” lying in the very spot on the table which used to be occupied with Mrs. Haddon's perennial stocking-knitting. And in the parlour itself, set in a great brown jar of water, was a noble specimen of the Elecampane, its yellow flowers shining like suns, its broad leaves seeming to occupy much

more than their legitimate space in the little room. Beside the plant, lying open on the table, as if its reader had suddenly been called away, was "Withering's Botany." I was a dabbler in botany myself, and I fancied I had known every plant in the parish, but the finder of the Elecampane had quicker eyes than mine. The only other change in the room was that every available space was filled with books; brought out, as it were, because they were needed before a proper place could be found for them.

We waited a few minutes; then came in Mrs. Haddon, the new-comer, the rival to my dear old friend. "A vulgar, set-up woman," I thought, hating her in advance. What did I see? A woman rather over than under the middle height, who must once have been pretty, for her soft, brown eyes were well set and well shaped, her complexion was still smooth, her hair, without a white thread in it, as glossy as a child's. Her dress was of plain, black silk, her cap white, tied under her chin with a broad white ribbon. Both probably were "old-fashioned," yet she and her dress so fitted and belonged to each other, that no one could have thought of her in anything else. There was not a soil, not a speck of dust about her; the useful-looking, well-formed hands were scrupulously clean; she brought with her a marvellous air of peace and repose; instinctively it was felt that mind and body were in perfect balance and ordering; there was upon her brow the stamp of that keeping which passeth all understanding. She simply expressed her pleasure at seeing my mother; her manner was respectful, for she evidently knew her own place so well that she could give every one else theirs. Her apology for letting us wait was that "she had been sending out their tea to the harvesters." She sending out tea to labourers—that unruffled woman whom a fairy might have set down in the middle of the room! Next came her son. His dress showed he wished to be taken for what he was, and nothing more—an English yeoman. He was tall and well-knit; he moved and walked uncommonly well; there appeared to be the same balance about him that there was about his mother; but the remarkable thing that he possessed was his voice; clear, distinct, penetrating, without a trace of provincialism. And when he spoke he showed very white and even teeth. I do not know how it was, but very soon the conversation turned upon the great plant, which Mr. Haddon said was entirely new to him. He appealed to my father for the name, and my father turned to me, saying that I was the botanist of the family. I rather prided myself upon knowing all the plants in the neighbourhood, but this one had escaped me; and whether it was vexation at being beaten at once on my own field, or foolish provocation at being thus dragged into the conversation, I answered rather shortly that it was the Elecampane, but I had not known that it was to be found in the neighbourhood. Whereupon Mr. Haddon, with great good-nature, began to tell me

exactly the spot on his land where it grew. I had passed the wet ditch a hundred times and had never seen it, and still further vexed was I at my own want of observation. Mr. Haddon then began to offer me as much of it as I liked, and I answered that with many thanks I would not trouble him on the matter. Something told me that he was fully aware of my feeling, and that he was returning my all but incivility with perfect breeding and temper. He next proposed to my father that they should go out and see the harvest field. I knew that at the bottom of that field was the locality of the Elecampane, and I resolved not to go; but my mother said she should like very much to be of the party, and Mrs. Haddon went also, so I could not stay behind. We went into the field, and my mother, who was quick and far-sighted, said at once, with great want of tact, as I undutifully thought, "Oh, Mary, there is the very plant!" My father proposed that we should go and look at it; and we looked at it, and wondered at it, handsome, bright thing that it was. Mrs. Haddon began to talk of its medicinal virtues, and Mr. Haddon cut down the tallest and handsomest stalk, and two broad leaves, and gave them to me. "It will be the show-plant in your collection," laughed my father. To me it was the symbol of defeat. I had, unseen, had a little battle with Mr. Haddon, and I knew, and I knew that he knew, that I had been conquered. I felt that Mr. Haddon was my master. I chafed under it; and I took a woman's revenge, and hated Mr. Haddon then and there. That position, too, I felt that he accepted, and for the time being gave himself no farther concern about the matter.

I could not throw the Elecampane away, for I knew that it would be enquired for, and a botanist would have to give some reason for the disappearance, but if I could I would have broken it into little bits; and now—that old dried plant is washed with tears!

So our first visit to the new occupants of the Oak Farm was over, and as we walked back, my father and mother remarked upon the "superiority" of the Haddons.

"He is not like a farmer," said my mother.

"I have not for a long time met with any one who had so much information," chimed in my father.

Then came a discussion as to the civilities to be shown them, and it was settled that on an early day they were to be asked to luncheon, when Mr. Haddon was to be shown over our Home Farm, and Mrs. Haddon over the gardens.

A few weeks passed on. The Haddons held their way, and did not much trouble their neighbours. They did nothing to their own house, but we heard that the cottage of every one of their labourers was put in thorough repair. Mr. Haddon and my father managed to hit it off very well, and he was often at the hall on business or parish discussions. Socially, the Haddons were an anomaly. My father, keeping his own among a medley of all conditions, met and talked to them on their own

ground, but among our neighbours there was much discussion as to the position they were to occupy in our "world." "The Purefoys visit them," was invariably said. "Ah, yes," was the answer, "but then they are in the parish; and, besides, the Purefoys——" and here came a pause, which might mean either that the Purefoys knew very queer people, or that they were too well established to lose by visiting the Haddons. Mr. and Mrs. Haddon were well-informed, well-read, and possessed of that good-breeding which was an instinct rather than an acquirement, but they filled the position of a yeoman and his mother. So, on the whole, our world decided not to visit them, and of course we did not force their company upon our neighbours.

Time, however, brings many changes, and in the course of that winter came a good deal of sickness and distress in the parish, which Mr. Haddon did his utmost to relieve. He and my father, by this means, were brought together still more; and he showed in all he did so clear a head, so sound a judgment, so warm a heart, that my father's admiration of him rose to fever-heat, and in its plenitude he wished to have him made a magistrate: which he declined. Coming to our house so frequently, he could not avoid meeting our neighbours, and they could not help being outwardly civil to our guest, for as a guest he was always treated in our house. But there was an indefinable something in their manner—they put him below the salt. As far as I was concerned, I had none of this folly; but he knew I did not like him; he knew—he could not help knowing—that all the little attentions and politenesses which fall to a lady's lot, especially to the lot of an elder daughter in a house like ours, were more acceptable to me from any one else—the veriest fool that we received—than from him; and he kept rather aloof from me, for he no more relished being disliked than other people would.

In January we had a visit from a distant relation, who came from the Haddons' old neighbourhood, and he at once began to talk about them, and my father to comment upon the anomaly that they were. We were told the story then. Mrs. Haddon was the daughter of a poor curate—he was her only child; and knowing that probably he would one day inherit wealth, his parents wisely determined so to educate him that he should be fitted to use it, and yet that he should keep his place as a yeoman still. His grandfather had grounded him in classics, and then he had been led to study everything relating to country life—natural science in all its branches. He had ended by a course at the University of Edinburgh, where he had distinguished himself greatly, and had attracted the notice of grand old Christopher North, who was wont to speak of his life as an ideal existence—abundant means and education to carry out the fullest details of country life, and to get at the heart and meaning of all that surrounded him—"A veritable pastoral in action." Then my father spoke of the great gardens he was planning, and referred to the unhappy Elecampane, which plant I regarded as the bane

of my existence. Better than this he was. My cousin's prosaic conversation became almost eloquent as he spoke of Mr. Haddon's goodness to his labourers; of his devotion to his father during a long illness; of his honour and uprightness.

The next day I became ill. I believe I caught cold; at any rate, I was in my room for some time, and tedious enough I found it. My mother, one morning, came to me with a face of great amusement. She had a new book in her hand, and she made me guess who it was written by. "Mr. Haddon," I said, because he seemed the most improbable of any one. Mr. Haddon it was, and a volume of poems, too!

I have often wondered whether, had my mother known all it was to bring me, she would ever have put that book into my hand. It was a time of inquiry and upsetting; the time of the first upheaval of those billows, social, religious, and political, which have since raged and chafed, and now threaten to submerge all ancient foundations, and leave, when they retire, a clear sweep for the new erections in which there is to be seen neither mistake nor fault. Ebenezer Elliot was singing anti-corn-law rhymes; O'Connell was declaiming in Ireland; a knot of men at Oxford were trying how near they could fly to Roman candles without singeing their wings. All these matters were discussed at our table; and I listened, and formed my own opinions upon them. Every prejudice in my nature was on the side of Toryism and things as they were. Certainly, as far as we were concerned, aristocratic institutions were a blessing. Without the hall and the rectory, I do not know what would have become of the parish. My father and the rector, my mother and the rector's wife, between them did all that was to be done, from healing domestic differences to curing sick chicken. But I had begun to see that there was another side to the story—that there were those in the world who had small cause to bless the squire or to love the master—that in religion it was not enough to repeat doctrines and principles by rote, but that it was necessary to make sure that these things were indeed so. My mind was in a state of chaos; and this book, spite of my dislike to its author, seemed sent on purpose to help me out of my difficulties. The poems went to the very heart of things; they were written in words that burn; matters that had puzzled and perplexed me were treated of with a clearness and fairness that I had never met with before; the mind was one that has the rare faculty of seeing both sides of a question, and discerning and grasping the truth that lies between them. My very individual doubts and questions were resolved, as though Mr. Haddon had been at my side, and heard them; I felt as though he had written that book for me. On and on I read, and back I re-read, and with the second reading came another revelation. This clear-headed, strong-hearted man had a capacity for suffering which touched my woman's heart. And at the same time came a terrible thought—that, in so far as

through our respective positions was possible, I had made him suffer. It all came back to me then, as by a lightning flash, scorching and burning my brain: all his quiet avoidance of me, his choosing my young sister's talk rather than mine; his resolute departure, soon and early, when I was present; and all that I had heard and known of his goodness. I could not persuade myself that he had not cared, for I knew too well now that he did. Mr. Haddon in very truth had conquered me now!

I got better and came down stairs again. It was in March, when the light gets brighter; and in those days the air was softer, and everything was spring-like. We had a party at luncheon. The meal over, our guests dispersed about the grounds. I was standing at the porch, waiting for some one, when up came a certain Lady Trevor, a neighbour of ours. Lady Trevor was, in her way, particular about her dress. She had all her things from a London milliner; but, whether from her own taste or her milliner's, every fashion she adopted appeared to be caricatured. On the present occasion her portly presence was arrayed in a silk, whose bright blue stripes, running round the skirt, made her look like nothing so much as a tub gone mad and out on its travels. Good-natured woman as she was, she began in perfect unconsciousness to talk about Mr. Haddon, and to tell me that he was engaged to be married to the daughter of a farmer in the parish from which he had come; and she said, besides, that she thought it a very good thing that he was going to marry in his own class. "Because, you know, my dear, however well he may be educated, a lady would only be offended by the incongruities of his relations." I contrasted Mrs. Haddon's black silk and Lady Trevor's blue striped one; my senses were in a whirl at this unexpected news; I know not what answer I made, and felt that I could laugh and cry in a breath. My party came to me at that moment, and, to my relief, we all went off to the conservatory: there the necessity of giving each a pretty camellia or two to carry home, and choosing such as would not come bodily off and leave the empty calyx; of seeing that everybody had a red, and everybody a white one, diverted my thoughts, or, rather, turned them into a second current; for the whole of the time there was a dull, heavy pain at the core of my heart. Glad enough was I, when our guests had departed, to plead the excuse of my not yet being strong, and go away to my quiet room. What right had I to be grieved that Mr. Haddon was going to be married? None whatever—but grieved I was.

It might not be true. I did not tell my news. No one should know it from me, but I longed to see him or his mother, and have the uncertainty over. Yet, by a strange perversity, I would not go to the Oak Farm, and Mrs. Haddon kept at home, for a sick servant gave her plenty to do. So I went on; I got up and breakfasted, and saw to my spring dresses, and talked to our visitors in every respect as I had done

for the last twelvemonth; but the real self lived in a tumult of feeling: It seemed as though long years lay between the morning of our luncheon-party and its evening. Could they belong to the same day? And a woman's instinct kept me from asking the one question whose answer would have given me peace.

I had a friend staying with me, and she proposed that we should walk in the morning rather than in the afternoon. I consented. We were going down the avenue, when, at the other end, I saw a figure which made my heart beat fast—it was Mr. Haddon. I could not turn back, and I was thankful that my friend kept talking of her first season in London, and running over the list of all she was to do and to see, for to answer her was impossible. Mr. Haddon came nearer; shook hands, and asked if my father was at home. I longed to ask him to forgive me; had he done that, all the rest would have seemed less hard to bear; but I could not. What between the thought of my own wicked folly and dislike, and what between the fear I had of betraying myself, my manner was only more awkward than ever; and I thought, vexed as I was, that it was only to be expected Mr. Haddon should end an interview with so unpleasant a person as quickly as possible. We bowed, and each went our way. Of the rest of our walk I remember very little, except a mad argument with my friend as to her having her court dress trimmed with natural blue-bells; I felt I must say or do something wild; but when we went indoors, there was Mr. Haddon still, and he stayed to luncheon. After luncheon he was writing, in the library, about some parish business. My father was in and out; my friend and I were writing also at the other end of the room. Three more silent people could not have been. The lock of the door in my own room was undergoing repair, so I could not retreat thither, as I generally did, for my peculiar occupations. My friend was to drive with my mother at half-past three, to return some visits paid her. It happened that a class of girls came to me on that day of the week, and I therefore remained at home. Rosa went to put on her bonnet; I wrote on as if my life depended upon it. Mr. Haddon spoke.

“Will you be so kind, Miss Purefoy, as to lend me a pen-wiper?”

Every accent of his voice was to my guilty conscience like a reproach; it seemed to say, “I know you dislike me.” I gave him my own pen-wiper, an ugly thing, big and brown as an elephant's ears; we had had a bazaar for something or other, and this pen-wiper I had bought because so hideous a thing was left on hand. Well, he used it, I suppose, but went on writing again. I heard Rosa's voice in the hall, and went to her. As I passed out of the door, Mr. Haddon put the pen-wiper into my hand, saying, “I am much obliged to you.”

Still holding it, I saw them off. As I was going to the library again, I thought of my pen-wiper, and mechanically opened its flaps. To my astonishment there was a cunningly folded paper between them, addressed

to me. What could it mean? Snatching my garden-hat from the hall table, I went off with it to that field which from my earliest childhood had been my thinking-ground. The gate was in one corner; from the gate along the head of the field was a row of great trees, which it was said, by tradition, a forefather of Mr. Haddon's had planted for a forefather of mine. The ground sloped steeply away to the edge of a tiny river; they were ploughing the upper part; half way down the slope was a natural terrace, up and down which I had walked for hours. To this I took my way, hardly knowing what I did, for my brain, in a whirl so long, seemed now suddenly to stand still. And yet every light and shade, every movement and sound of that instant were photographed to me, so that I see now the long shadows of the trees across the turf, the glittering of the sun upon the water, the distant hills; and I hear the men whistling and stopping to speak to the oxen, and their heavy tread, and the grating of the plough, and, over all, the singing of the birds. I opened my paper—it was from Mr. Haddon. With my father's full consent, he told me of his love. Could this be, and for *me*? I walked up and down, and I read the words over and over—there was, there could be no mistake about them, and yet in that my deep joy, there was an under-current of self reproach, for he told me his love, he said, hopelessly. He told me because he felt he must have it decided one way or the other. He had the right to offer an honourable man's affections; if I rejected them, he would return to his old home with his mother, and he promised me that I should never hear of him again; that he would take my answer as a final one. Then the need of giving *some* answer rushed upon me. I went to the gate. There he stood. I had no words, I had thought of none, only that I must speak to him. My face was enough, for he took my hand and held it in a quiet, firm clasp, and we stood silently there, looking out over the gate at the long shadows and the glinting sunlight, and the distant hills; and the labourers called the oxen, and the birds sang above our heads. Then, after a long time, I spoke. I felt that one thing I must say. "Can you forgive it all?" His answer came unhesitatingly, "I have been forgiven myself, dearest."

So we two turned and went to the house; our lives to be together so long as God spared them. There was his welcome into our family, there was an enfolding in Mrs. Haddon's arms; and we were married. For five years the Oak Farm was a scene of such happiness as on this earth is perhaps seldom known. Then, one day, they brought him in and laid him down in the old hall—dead. He had rushed forward to save a child from being run over by a waggon. The sudden exertion probably started some hidden mischief into activity. The child frolicked laughingly away, my husband fell and never moved again. A noble ending was it to a noble life. The last of the Haddons had passed away. My dream was at an end.

"PAR NOBILE FRATRUM."

AN EPISODE OF DUBLIN LIFE SIXTY YEARS AGO.

ON "a raw and gusty day" in the month of November, 1809, a well-appointed curricie and pair dashed up to the shop of a goldsmith and jeweller, residing in Dame Street, in the city of Dublin. This goldsmith, whom we will here call Jones, was a man in an extensive business, and was supposed to have amassed a large fortune. But, in spite of his fortune, Mr. Jones still continued in trade; and, not being above his calling, he would still stand behind his own counter, and attend to his customers himself. In truth, Mr. Jones was a man possessed of good common sense, and though desirous of adding to his income by all the honest means within his grasp, he was universally known to be a man of great large-heartedness and unbounded liberality. He was, at the date of our episode, about 40 years of age, had a wife and young family, and resided in the suburbs. Every morning at ten o'clock, punctual to a moment, he would be on his way to his establishment, and every evening at five would be on his return to his villa at Ranelagh.

It was on or about the 21st of November, then, 1809, and about twelve o'clock in the day, that this dashing equipage drove up to Mr. Jones's shop door. The driver was dressed in showy livery, the cockade in his hat signifying that his master was a military man. Beside him was seated a gentleman, apparently in the prime of life, and dressed in the full blow of fashion. Though a fine-looking man, he had an air of delicacy and great refinement about him; a certain paleness in the cheek, and the languid air with which he lolled back in his seat seemed to denote some recent illness from which he was only just recovering; while his right arm, resting in a sling, might induce the looker-on to conclude (coupling this fact with his military air and the dress of the servant) that he had probably been wounded in some of the battles lately fought in the Peninsula, and was now home on sick leave of absence.

Mr. Jones was behind his counter, and bowed to the stranger as he advanced towards him.

"Ah—haw—can I see Mr. Jones?"

"I am he, sir," replied the goldsmith.

The military looking stranger bowed slightly in reply, and continued.

"Mr. Jones, I have been recommended by my friend, Sir John —, (naming a well-known and wealthy baronet of the day), to look up in your shop some things in the way of jewellery that I require. He tells me that I shall get them here as good as in London or Paris."

Mr. Jones bowed low to this, went over the stereotyped phrases of trade, and then politely asked in what he could serve him.

The stranger wanted some rings, a watch chain, and breast pin, all of which were promptly submitted to his inspection; he seemed to be greatly pleased with the display of the articles, which were first-rate in their way, and he evinced great taste and judgment in the selections he made.

"Now, Mr. Jones," said the stranger, off-handedly, "if you will have the kindness to make them all up in that jewel-box (pointing to one on the counter) and keep them for me, I will call for them on returning from Merrion Square. Having some calls to make, I might possibly mislay or lose it, so that it will be all the safer in your keeping for an hour or two. Meantime, make out the bill and I will pay you."

The costly and flashing gems were duly enshrined in the jewel-box, and Mr. Jones went to his desk to make out the bill as requested. While doing so, he asked in a business sort of way, what name and address he should put on the box. The stranger, who at the time of the question seemed to be deeply engaged in examining some magnificent brilliants which lay in a glass case, replied, after some time, and as if thoughtlessly:

"Lord William Paty, Colonel of the —th Dragoons."

Then looking up, and, as if recollecting himself, he exclaimed:

"Oh, Mr. Jones, I have committed a sad breach of decorum in not having announced myself at first." (He evidently did not wish to treat the jeweller in a patronizing, but in a familiar way). "When you asked me the question, I was deep in the beauties of that magnificent bracelet. What a splendid piece of workmanship," he added, as if to himself—then, as if again recollecting himself and awaking from a reverie, he took a card case from his pocket, and taking out a card with no slight trouble and inconvenience, while he held the case between his teeth, he presented the card in his left hand with a bow to Mr. Jones.

Now Mr. Jones, who was a shrewd man, up to business, and not to be taken in by any man, lord or otherwise, had been pursuing a train of thought in his own mind, and had drawn therefrom his own conclusions, which, briefly stated, might amount to this:

"This man, who is really a lord and a colonel of a crack regiment of dragoons, did not on his entrance seek to overwhelm me by a flourish of trumpets, in announcing his rank and position, as a parvenu or an imposter would be sure to do. Now, this is true, real, downright nobility—this is no mushroom coronet—and this will be a customer to my taste." And Mr. Jones inwardly congratulated himself on having done a day's good business, and in having secured so wealthy and aristocratic a customer. So bowing again politely to his lordship, he proceeded quietly to make out the bill and to lay it on the counter before Lord William Paty.

Lord William merely looked at the amount without at all glancing at the items, and taking out his pocket-book at once settled the demand.

"Now, my lord," said Mr. Jones, "permit me to show you some of these articles which you seem to admire so greatly." And he took out the case, literally laden with the costliest gems of rarest value and ornaments of most cunning skill and workmanship, and pushed it—all flashing and blazing with diamond, ruby, and amethyst light—over the counter towards the Colonel.

His lordship gazed in admiration on the glittering mass, assuring Mr. Jones that he had never seen anything in London or on the Continent to surpass the splendour of these magnificent and elaborately wrought ornaments. "By-the-bye," said he, "I had promised Lady William Paty a bracelet, and brilliant ring, but I was waiting until I visited Paris; little dreaming indeed that I could get here in Dublin so splendid an assortment."

"That bracelet, my lord," said Mr. Jones, pointing to the one which the colonel had been so long admiring, "that bracelet I would undertake to match against any you could find in any city on the face of the globe; that large stone in the centre is a diamond which might grace the crown of an emperor, while the smaller stones that encircle it are brilliants of the very first water. And here," said he, singling out a lady's diamond ring from the midst of a brilliant heap, "here is a ring to match, which I can confidently recommend; its intrinsic value being equal to its beauty. The price of the two would be—let me see—yes, I would give you both for 450 guineas—and let me tell you that large stone in the bracelet would of itself bring more than double that sum if kept till there was a run on the diamond market; to say nothing of the other brilliants in the bracelet and ring, and the value of gold and workmanship in both ornaments; at present there is a lull in the market, therefore I can sell them to you so much under their real value."

"Oh, I see at once, Mr. Jones," replied the Colonel, "that the price you offer them at is under their value. I am a judge in these sort of things, and therefore would not feel the slightest hesitation in giving the price you ask; but——"

"Then, my lord, I shall have the pleasure of putting these up also, and adding them to the other package, to be sent to your residence, or to be kept till you call for them on your return."

"Why, to be candid with you, Mr. Jones," replied the Colonel, "I would purchase them at once, without the slightest hesitation, but I find, on looking at my pocket-book, that I have not brought money enough out with me. I did not intend to make so extensive a purchase to-day, and therefore did not bring a large sum of money with me. However, I shall look in on you to-morrow or next day, and then I can——"

"Quite unnecessary, my lord," replied Mr. Jones, "quite unneces-

sary. As you like the articles, and agree to the price, I will have them sent to your residence, and you can call at any time that suit your convenience and pay for them."

"Much obliged, indeed, Mr. Jones—much obliged for your civility and courtesy; but as there is no hurry I think it would be better to wait until to-morrow or next day, when I will come provided with the necessary funds. But stay, a thought has just struck me—stupid that I was! You see, Mr. Jones, here have I been about purchasing a bracelet and ring for Lady Paty; the ring may not fit, and, possibly, she might like both of a different pattern. She, unfortunately, is an invalid, and unable to leave the house. Now, suppose we were to send those things for her inspection and approval in the first instance. I could then send my servant for the money, and thus bring down both birds at a shot. What think you?"

"Well, certainly, my lord, certainly; by all means let them be sent for her ladyship's inspection and approval before the purchase is concluded. I'll have them made up, and send my foreman at once to——"

"I think I can save you all that unnecessary trouble," interrupted the Colonel. "I must send my servant with a note to my wife for the money: he can take the jewels for her inspection at the same time, without putting you to the trouble of despatching your foreman. He is a trustworthy fellow, shrewd and intelligent, and thousands could be safely committed to his care.

"Very well, my lord—very well; even as you like. Then we may as well send both parcels at once—the jewels you have bought, and those we are sending for inspection."

"Exactly. And now, if you will be so kind as to provide me with writing materials, I will pen a note to her ladyship.

The writing materials were speedily provided, and while Mr. Jones proceeded to enshrine the valuable ornaments in a casket, the Colonel prepared to pen an epistle to the lady of his heart and home.

But here an unexpected difficulty suddenly presented itself. The Colonel took the pen in his left hand, and fumbled with it awhile, as though essaying whether he could write with it or not; but from the awkward and unworkmanlike way in which he handled it, it was plain that he could not make any characters on paper that would be intelligible. Of this he seemed himself to be perfectly sensible, for he threw the pen on the counter with a muttered exclamation of annoyance, and slightly raising his right elbow, attempted to disengage the arm from the sling; but a sudden distortion of his face, accompanied with an exclamation of pain, showed he was unable to effect his purpose. "Confound it!" he exclaimed, aloud. I had forgotten this mishap altogether!" and looking up, he saw the eyes of Mr. Jones, who had witnessed the whole transaction, intently fixed upon him.

"I fear, my lord," said he, in a sympathizing tone, "that you are suffering severely from your arm. A hurt, I presume; perhaps a wound,—a wound in battle, fighting in defence of your country?"

"Suffering? Oh, yes. I have suffered severely, and do so still whenever I attempt to move it. You are right, Mr. Jones (another painful distortion of face) wounded in battle, and as you say, in defence of my country. I went with Sir Arthur to Portugal, now more than a year ago, and since then have been present at the four great battles fought, including Corunna, in Sir John's disastrous retreat. My latest affair was Talavera, now four months ago, as you know. There I got a sabre slash in the wrist. The carpal, or metacarpal, bones (I think the doctors call them so) have been injured; consequently the wound is slow to heal, and whenever I attempt to—oh!—ah!" Here the Colonel made a sudden exclamation of pain, and a terrible distortion of visage. Endeavouring to suit action to word, he had attempted to use his arm; hence the agony he endured, and the exclamation he had made.

Good-natured, sympathizing Mr. Jones hastened to the rescue.

"My dear sir! I—I beg pardon—my lord, don't unnecessarily distress yourself, and put yourself to torture. Can I assist you? Might I not be your aman—amanuensis for the moment, and write from your dictation whatever you wish to say?"

"Many thanks," eagerly exclaimed the other, brightening up; "yes, that will do just as well. A few words are all I have to say. There!" (pushing paper, pen and ink over to Mr. Jones) "just write me down the following; any slip of paper will do:—

"DEAREST MARY,

"Send me, by bearer, the rouleau of bank-notes you will find in the secret drawer of my cabinet. Great haste."

"There," said the Colonel, "that will do. You need not mind any name, as her ladyship will know the servant. Thanks, Mr. Jones. Now we are all right; the man can explain about the jewellery, without your taking the trouble to write it. Ah, stay! Just add, in a postscript—'*You need not expect me home to dinner!*' There! that will do. Just fold it up; no address—no need for name or address; she will know Thomas, and he will explain all. Here, Thomas! Oh, by the way, Mr. Jones, be kind enough to send one of your men to stand at the horses' heads, while I give my servant his directions."

Mr. Jones at once complied with the request. Thomas, having given the horses in charge to one of the porters, entered the shop, and, making a military salute, stood before his master.

"Thomas, you will go back, and deliver this note into her ladyship's own hand. Also take charge of this parcel. Mind, it contains

jewels of very great value; therefore don't let it out of your possession until you give it into the hands of your mistress. You understand?"

"Yes, my lord."

"Very well. Tell her ladyship that I wish her to look at the bracelet and ring—and say that I have purchased them for her, subject to her approval. Then you are to bring me back word if she likes them; if she does, good and well; if not, we can either exchange them for others or cancel the purchase altogether. The latter disagreeable alternative," he added, turning and speaking to Mr. Jones, "will not, I apprehend, have to be resorted to, seeing the splendour and variety of the jewels in your establishment."

Mr. Jones bowed low at the flattering compliment.

"Now, Thomas, having done this, you will return here in all haste, bringing me a package which her ladyship will hand you. Be very careful, for it will contain Bank of England notes to a considerable amount."

"Am I to drive, my lord, or to leave the curricule with you?"

"Oh, drive—drive man, by all means, and don't spare the cattle, for it is growing late, and I have other business to transact."

* * * * *

Mr. Jones invited the Colonel into his private office, but he declined. Mr. Jones then had a chair brought into the shop for him, on which he seated himself and opened the "Saunders" of that morning, which was handed to him. But the Colonel evidently was not a "reading man," at all events, on that particular morning; he glanced quickly over the sheet, and threw the paper down, exclaiming, "Bad, bad, bad. That unfortunate Walcheren expedition—the wreck of a magnificent army—returning home without having struck one good blow. Well, Mr. Jones, one thing, at all events, is plain—Pitt is not a Wellesley; Chatham is not a Wellington. However peerless and unapproachable father and brother have been in the Cabinet, it is plain that the present Earl of Chatham was not born to figure in 'the field.'"

"Ah! yes, yes, indeed, my lord," observed Mr. Jones, wishing to make some remark, but at the same time not well knowing what to say. "Yes, indeed, my lord, the Earl of Chatham was a great man—a very great man. What a pity—what a great pity that he was such a martyr to the gout! But, my lord," he continued, "I believe that battle of Talavera was a great affair."

"Great!" exclaimed the Colonel, starting from his chair, "great!" why, Mr. Jones, it was more than great, it was *grand*, sir, *grand*; awfully grand! Had you seen the bearing of Sir Arthur during the entire of the fight, as I did, you would have been proud, sir, of your countryman, and acknowledged that he well merited the peerage he obtained."

"Ah—yes," said Mr. Jones, wishing to show his knowledge of the leading events of the day, "ah—yes, he has been made Viscount Wellington, and has, I am sure, as you say, well merited the honour."

"Yes, Mr. Jones, I was with him from the first, landed with him at Mondego Bay, joined in the shout of victory at Rolica, and witnessed the defeat of Junot at Vimiera; all was going on well, sir, all was going on admirably under his transcendent military genius, when suddenly this confounded jealousy crept into our home war councils, and in an evil hour Sir Arthur was superseded. Then, sir, then came that drivelling Dalrymple, and that incompetent Burrard, and then came that disgrace to our nation, and that which made us the laughing-stock of our enemies. Then came 'the Convention of Cintra,'—it is enough to make a soldier's blood boil to think, after all our success, that these bungling warriors—heaven save the mark! should allow the vanquished enemy to evacuate Portugal with all his arms and military stores."

"Oh, dear me! dear me!" said Mr. Jones.

"Yes, sir! that was the short and the long of it; *we* did the work, *we* bore the burden, *we* had the toil and dust, and the sweat and the bloodshed of the fight all to ourselves; *we* reaped two glorious victories, and when we were preparing to gather in the harvest, then comes the order like a thunderclap for the suspension of the great genius who controlled and inspired us. Wellesley had to retire. Dalrymple and Burrard came and scattered to the winds the golden sheaves of victory which we were binding and preparing for the garner."

"Oh, dear me, dear me! said Mr. Jones, again; "but I think, my lord, you said something of Corunna; that was a sad affair, was'nt it?"

"Yes; I was there too. Wishing still for active service I continued in the Peninsula, and had a staff appointment under Sir John Moore; but what could that great commander do? The dark cloud of Cintra still hung heavily over all his mightiest efforts, while the Spanish Junta made him lavish promises that it could not perform, and although Saragossa was nobly defended, still Napoleon was master of Madrid. So this truly great warrior had nothing for it but to retreat by forced marches to the sea. But, with all these disadvantages, he soon gave the enemy a taste of his heroism. Turning on them at Corunna, the noble stag stood at bay. I was near him all the time. I knew the great reliance he placed on his army, especially on his highland brigade, and when he issued that never-to-be-forgotten watchword, 'Highlanders, remember Egypt!' I well remember what a flush of pride lit up his noble face as he listened to the deafening cheers that burst from the lips of those hardy mountaineers. In truth, although a disastrous retreat, it was a noble stand and a glorious victory."

"But his death, my Lord—Sir John's death—was he not killed at the close of the fight?"

"Yes, at its very close. He died, literally died in the arms of vic-

tory. I was near him still. I supported him when he fell, and the most melancholy duty I ever performed was wrapping him up in his military cloak for burial, on the ramparts of Corunna."

"Oh, dear me! dear me!" said Mr. Jones, for the third time.

Mr. Jones was not possessed of very great conversational powers, but the Colonel was equal to any two men. The shop assistants stopped the work they were at, to listen with open mouth and eyes, all agape, to the wonderful stories that he told of the war; one would imagine, from the varying play of their faces, and the short exclamations of wonder or approval that they, one and all made from time to time, that they could hear, in the graphic descriptions of the Colonel, the clash of steel, the whiz of bullets, the thunder of the charge, and the shouts of victory! So an hour and more had passed away, and it seemed to Mr. Jones only as a very few minutes. Suddenly the Colonel halted in his discourse, and looking through the window, exclaimed excitedly:

"Hallo! by Jove! there goes Dundas and the commander of the forces!" as two horsemen, one a civilian and the other in military attire, dashed up the street at a sharp canter, followed by an orderly dragoon, and a servant in livery. "That's Dundas* to a certainty, and you may take my word for it, Mr. Jones, that there is something in the wind now; something new from the Netherlands, or despatches from the Peninsula. I know the latter have been expected for the last two days, so I'll e'en take a run up to the Castle, and have a chat with Dundas. I'm sure to find him there now. By-the-bye, should my servant return in my absence, desire him to wait here till I come back. I'm sure to be the bearer of wonderful intelligence to you, so don't you stir a step till I return. Au revoir." He nodded, and was gone.

* * * * *

That evening, at five o'clock, Mr. Jones was on his return to his house at Ranelagh. The Colonel had not come back, but Mr. Jones thought nothing of that; he had gone to see and have a chat with the chief secretary on business connected with the state, and had doubtless been detained longer than he expected. The servant likewise had not returned, but what of that? nothing more natural than that he had met his master in the street, and been countermanded by him. Mr. Jones was in perfect good humour with himself and with every body else, and was inwardly congratulating himself on having done very good business for one day; so he gave two extra fivepenny pieces on his way home to some deserving objects of charity, and upon reaching the door of his villa, found himself in a very satisfactory frame of mind, and ready to do ample justice to his dinner. He was fond of roast goose; roast goose stuffed with potatoes and onions, and served up with apple sauce; and his good lady, while presiding at the tea-urn on that morning, had

* The Honourable R. Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, who was Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1809.

casually and in the course of conversation dropped the hint that roast goose, served as he dearly loved it, would be one of the dishes on his dinner-table that day. So Mr. Jones, in remembrance of that, sniffed and sniffed again, as he hastened along the little gravel-walk that led to the door of his villa; but the usual fragrant odour which always greeted him on roast-geese days did not greet him now, and he was rather surprised as he knocked loudly at the door of his house. It was opened by a maid-servant, who stared somewhat strangely at her master. Mr. Jones, not noticing this, hung up his hat and great coat in the hall, and walked into his dining-parlour. Mystery inextricable! the room was not clad in its dinner habiliments—the last embers of a sea-coal fire were flickering and expiring in the grate—the dinner-table was denuded of its accustomed snow-white covering—and in the recess, dimly lighted by the flickering flame of the fast expiring fire, stood the sideboard, bearing indeed its accustomed load of flashing silver plate, but wearing that cheerless look that seemed plainly to denote that there was to be no dinner to-day.

Utterly confounded at what he saw, and a little nettled in his temper—for a hungry man balked of his dinner is always irritable—Mr. Jones pulled hastily at the bell.

The same maid-servant appeared in answer to the summons, bearing two waxlights in silver candlesticks, which she deposited on the empty dinner-table.

"Why, what the dev—what does all this mean Susan? near six o'clock and no dinner!"

"Dinner, sir?—dinner!—why you said—my mistress, I mean—that is she told me, sir—that you—oh, here is my mistress, sir."

Into the room bounded Mrs. Jones—and running straight up to her astonished husband flung her arms round his neck, and kissed him fondly and repeatedly. Mrs. Jones was a fine, buxom, blue-eyed, flaxen-haired blonde, some ten years younger than her husband—and she seemed to be in the height of boisterous and extravagant spirits.

"Why, Mary, dear," said the now completely bewildered goldsmith, gently disengaging himself from her embrace, "what on earth does all this mean? Here am I home at the usual hour and no appearance of dinner, and you commence kissing me as if I had been absent for six months.

"Oh, *Sir* Samuel, *Sir* Samuel Jones," almost screamed the delighted woman, leaning peculiar emphasis on the knightly prefix. "My dear old darling Noddy, you that were plain Samuel this morning, but are now *Sir* Samuel Jones, you just want to give me a double surprise, that's what you're at, I know well, you precious dumpling. I know it all; I'm in the secret! I have been at court, or the court has been to me. The Duke has sent me word about it all. Oh, fie, *Sir* Samuel, to keep me in the dark, not to tell me, *me*, *Lady* Jones!"

"Why, powers above! in the name of all that's sacred, is the woman gone clean, stark, staring mad?" said the utterly confounded jeweller, turning to the housemaid for an explanation; but that very discreet functionary had vanished on the entrance of her mistress.

"Why, Mary, dear," turning again to his wife, "what *do* you mean? Am I dreaming, or are you gone mad? Tell me in one word, in the first place, why there is no appearance of dinner?"

"Dinner! dinner! why, you inveterate, incorrigible, incurable quizz! Dinner! didn't you tell me yourself that you would not be home to dinner?"

"I tell you—I?"

"Well, didn't you write it to me, which is the same thing?"

"Write!—I write you word that I would not be home to dinner!"

"Yes, *Sir Samuel!*" and the lady made a profound curtsy.

"Mary," said the now infuriated man, "I am not mad, at all events, and I don't believe that I am dreaming—Woman! I say, what *is* it you mean?—tell me at once, in plain, downright English, and drop this absurd, masquerading tomfoolery."

Mrs. Jones was completely taken aback. She had never heard her husband speak after this fashion, and she began to fear that something must be wrong; so taking both his hands in her own, and looking into his face with all the gravity she could assume, she said:

"Now, my dear Sam, may not I rather ask what do *you* mean?—are not *you* rather playing a little bit of masquerading with me?"

"I—I—I—masquerading?"

"Yes; did you not send me a note on a half sheet of paper, this very day, written with your own hand, (though you forgot to sign your name), and did you not tell me in a postscript not to expect you home to dinner?"

"Eh!—what!—a note!—in my own hand!—without a sign of my name? No—no—no—it was for the Colonel—for Lord William Patey—for the dragoon—I never——"

"But, my dear Sam, there must be some great mistake. I don't know who you mean by the Colonel, and Lord William, the dragoon. All I know is that the Duke of Richmond's* own servant drove up to the gate to-day, and gave me in this very room your note; he told me that he left the Duke in your shop; that he was arranging some very great matters with you—that the King wanted to get the loan of some money from you; and that when you promised to lend him the money, the Duke immediately said he would knight you; that you then went down on your knees; and the Duke touched you with his sword, and told you to rise *Sir Samuel!*"

"Oh, merciful powers!" groaned the goldsmith.

"Yes; and he told me that I was a lady; and he called me *Lady*

* The Duke of Richmond was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland at this time.

Jones, and said he would have the pleasure of drinking my very good health, and so, of course, I gave him a guinea.

"A guinea!"

"Yes. Then I went so the cabinet, to the secret drawer, and took out——"

"Eh!—what!—what secret drawer?" shrieked the excited man.

"Why *your* cabinet, Sam, dear, to be sure; and the secret drawer where you know you put the large bundle of notes, last Monday, and so——"

"And the notes, woman!—Mary!—the notes—the money—the——"

"Well, I gave them to him as you desired me; and he put them in a large pocket-book, and said that the King would soon have them, and that your fortune was made, and then——"

But she could not go on; her unfortunate husband had already heard too much; human nature could not bear up against such an accumulated load of misfortune; and screaming, rather than exclaiming, "*The infernal scoundrels! Robbed—robbed!—doubly robbed and ruined!*" the miserable man fell fainting at the feet of his wife.

* * * * *

The "*Par Nobile Fratrum*," or precious pair of scoundrels, had done their business well. The elder, and more accomplished of the two, who, in his youth, had received a good education, was well up in the history of the time, and knew some of the fashionable slang of the day, took the more difficult *rôle* of the aristocratic swell, the lordly and dashing colonel of dragoons, the enthusiastic admirer of Sir Arthur, the aide-de-camp and personal friend of Sir John, who caught him in his arms when he fell, and wound him in his soldier's cloak for burial; while to the younger and less aspiring one fell the part of his servant, or, as he represented himself, the groom of His Excellency the Duke of Richmond!

It was believed that they had obtained an insight into Mr. Jones's domestic habits, &c., through a discharged servant of profligate character.

Some years after, they were both arrested, tried, and convicted in London of some serious crime, and were sentenced to transportation for life: thus verifying the classical adage that "*punishment*, though slow of foot, seldom fails to overtake the guilty."

HENRY RIBTON.

THE EARTHQUAKE IN CALIFORNIA.

THE following private letter was written by a lady living in Alameda. It gives a graphic account of the earthquake and its consequences, and may prove interesting to many readers. Alameda is just across the bay from San Francisco.

ALAMEDA, Oct. 23rd, 1868.

DEAR E.—We have scarcely slept at all for two nights. Of course you will see by the papers, long before this reaches you, all about the terrible earthquake we had on the 21st. The shock came at eight o'clock in the morning; I was in the sitting-room, mending a sacque of M's.; knew in a minute what it was, and rushed out of the door with M. and mamma. We sank right down on the ground; I thought mamn a was going to faint, and M. was frightened almost out of her senses. I shall never forget their faces. It was the hardest shock that has ever been felt in California, and lasted too long for an earthquake. It was perfectly frightful to see the large trees swaying all about, and to hear the rumbling noise. I expected all the time to see the ground open—it did open at Hayward's, twelve miles from here.

Presently we heard Mrs. S—— scream from her window up stairs—they are our next door neighbours, you know.

Directly after the first shock, we thought of papa and L.; they had both started off a few minutes before; papa for San Leandro, and L. for the city. We were so afraid the cars would be on the long wharf—I knew it was just the time for them to be there. I had a great time to keep mamma from going up the road for papa, or down to the depôt to hear about the cars. Mr. and Mrs. S—— came running over, Mrs. S—— crying out, "Oh, my house is ruined!" They were all upstairs at the time, and could not get down till the worst was over. They said the children were thrown from one side of the room to the other, and they held on to the bed to keep from falling; the plaster came tumbling all around them. Mr. S—— told papa that he never expected to get down alive.

N—— jumped on a horse and rode after papa, and then to the depôt to hear from L——. He soon came back, saying that they were safe, and after that we felt a little better. The shocks still continued, with a little time between. After a while we ventured to look in the windows, first in the sitting-room, and then in the parlour. Everything was in

confusion—the bookcase thrown down and broken; glass and books all mixed together, a large chair thrown down and broken; the clock stopped of course; the sewing machine pushed out from the wall, the lamp upset, chimney broken, and the oil running out; some little vases thrown on the floor. And in the parlour everything seemed to be in the middle of the room—all the little trinkets thrown down, but strange to say most of them not broken; the what-not emptied. We were afraid to step inside for ever so long. Mrs. S—— wanted us to come over to look at their house; just as we came to it there was another hard shock, and how the house did rattle! N—— said, “Oh! look at S——’s chimney.” We looked, and there was nothing but a big hole in the roof; that reminded us of our own, which we soon saw was down too. Pretty soon papa came riding back, brought word that the courthouse was down, and Mr. Josselyn killed; how thankful we all felt that papa was not there.

After a while we ventured into the house and tried to fix things a little, but it was very slow work, for we had to run out about every ten minutes—we kept all the doors open. About noon Mrs. C—— and A—— and J—— walked down; J——’s face was as white as her apron almost, and we all trembled so we could hardly stand. While we were talking there came another shock, and we all ran out of doors. Their kitchen stove upset; and nearly set the house on fire, and A——’s marble topped bureau was thrown down and broken. They had stopped at Aunt E——’s a minute, and said she took it very coolly, and was not much frightened. Oh my! what a state everybody’s pantry was in—sugar, oil, vinegar, cream, spices, and everything all mixed together. We walked down to C——’s; she was out of doors with the children, trying to get lunch; sent the girl for some cups and saucers—she came back with four and said “These are all that are left.” Mrs. C—— said she hadn’t a single vase or lamp.

When we came back I found mamma on the couch by the door, trying to get some rest; we all felt so tired, and the day seemed so long, and still we dreaded the night. We could not think of sleeping upstairs. Just before dark, papa and the boys went up and brought down some blankets and a mattress; the boys slept in the barn, and the rest of us on the floor. Precious little sleep we had; I heard the clock strike every hour but two; we were glad when morning came, and were up about five. I think I never was nervous before, but I certainly was that day and night. I felt as if I should like to move away to some country where they never have earthquakes. I do hope it will soon be over. We went to bed last night, but had several shocks, one quite heavy, about three o’clock; we started up, but by that time it was over. They are such frightful things. There is something so awful in feeling the ground shake beneath your feet. M—— would not come inside the house all day; and last night just after she got into bed there

came a shock; she began to cry, and begged mamma to come and sleep with her; she felt safe then. Mr. K——'s house is a ruin. I rode up to see it this morning, a handsome octagon house; one side is completely thrown down, and it is all cracked—the family are looking for another house.

M. B——'s house is in ruins. I heard that a man could walk through the cracks in it. Every house is without a chimney. Three years ago they had a bad earthquake in October; you know I was with you then, and did not feel it, but this one was the worst that has ever been felt here. Mamma and I did not go up-stairs till the next day; everything was in confusion, books thrown down, pitchers upset, mamma's looking-glass broken and mine just saved. That heavy little bureau you know of, tilted back, the bed moved more than a foot from the wall, my pallette in the middle of the floor, together with a pile of pictures and papers. We have been working hard to get things put to rights again. I did not tell you that the dog and the lamb came running up to us for safety, and kept close to us till the worst was over.

I must stop and go to bed. M—— won't go alone and is asleep on the couch. All my letter is taken up with this awful earthquake, but I can think of very little else just now. I walked up to see Aunt E—— a few minutes yesterday; their house is not hurt at all, only they lost a chimney of course; but the plaster is not cracked. It being a one-story house saved it, I expect.

Write soon to me. Give love to all from

K——.

